

Hafa Adai!

Adrift mariner is rescued in FSM. **PAGE 2**
Visitor arrivals up 95% in December. **PAGE 3**

75¢

Saipan Tribune

THE CNMI'S FIRST DAILY NEWSPAPER

Volume XXX, Issue No. 12

www.saipantribune.com

MONDAY JANUARY 20, 2020

www.facebook.com/saipantribune

New viral threat rears head

By KIMBERLY A. BAUTISTA
kimberly_bautista@saipantribune.com
REPORTER

The Commonwealth Healthcare Corp. is currently monitoring a new coronavirus that has been reported in China and Japan

RELATED STORY

China reports 17 new cases in viral pneumonia outbreak. **PAGE 15**

Latest reports say that 17 more people in central China have been diagnosed with the

and could possibly pose a threat to the Marianas if precautionary measures are not undertaken now.

new form of viral pneumonia. In total, 62 cases of the novel coronavirus have been iden-

tified in the city of Wuhan, where the virus appears to have originated.

At least a half-dozen countries in Asia and three U.S. airports have started screening incoming airline passengers from central China. The list includes Thailand and

Japan, which have together reported three cases of the disease in people who had come from Wuhan.

According to a CHCC statement, it has been monitoring the outbreak of the mystery illness in Wuhan since last week, See **VIRAL** on **Page 4**



HOMELESS COUNT

Volunteers for the 4th annual Point-In-Time count attend the Commonwealth Homeless Coalition orientation at the Pedro P. Tenorio Multi-Purpose Center in Susupe last Jan. 17. The count itself will be held on Jan. 25.

JUSTINE NAUTA

Story on
Page 2

Tap water menace prompts suit vs 8

By FERDIE DE LA TORRE
ferdie_delatorre@saipantribune.com
REPORTER

The CNMI government is suing eight companies for allegedly making chemicals that later contaminated the CNMI's drinking water and pose a threat to public health, the environment, and

natural sources of water.

The CNMI's lawsuit was filed before the Superior Court last Nov. 19, but the case came to light after one of the eight companies being sued asked to remove the matter from the local court to the U.S. District Court for See **TAP** on **Page 4**

» **1 company removes lawsuit from Superior Court to District Court**



In this Friday, Jan. 10, 2020 photo, Jefferson County Sheriff Mark Pettway speaks in a cell at the old county jail in Birmingham, Ala.

Alabama county to preserve jail remnant where MLK was held

BIRMINGHAM, Ala.

(AP)—An Alabama county is preserving what's left of the lockup where officials say Martin Luther King Jr. served his final time behind bars just months before his assassination.

Jefferson County commissioners unanimously approved a resolution Thursday to memorialize and preserve an area on the seventh floor

of the county courthouse that used to be a jail. Much of the floor is now used for storage and mechanical equipment.

Sheriff Mark Pettway said the civil rights leader was held on the floor in 1967, when he served three days for contempt after losing an appeal on his conviction for demonstrating without a permit years earlier. A timeline produced with the See **ALABAMA** on **Page 4**

INSIDE



BUSINESS

The idea of ridesharing comes to Saipan with the launch last Friday of the Island-Ride app.

PAGE 13



ASIA

Philippine officials are bracing for a long crisis whether the Taal volcano erupts or not.

PAGE 15



LIFE & STYLE

Prince Harry and wife Meghan will no longer use the titles "royal highness" or get public funds.

PAGE 19



SCAN ME WITH A COMPATIBLE QR READER TO KEEP UPDATED ON ALL THE LATEST NEWS.



GOT A NEWS TIP?

TEL: 235-6397 / 235-2440

FAX: 235-3740

EMAIL: editor@saipantribune.com



Homeless coalition still accepting volunteers for survey

Local

From left, Chris Heeb of the CNMI Homeless Prevention Coalition, Rosanna Aquino of the Northern Marianas Housing Corp., Jacob Muña of NMHC, and Gennie Bliss of the CNMI Homeless Prevention Coalition pose at the Commonwealth Homeless Coalition's orientation at the Pedro P. Tenorio Multi-Purpose Center in Susupe last Jan. 17.

JUSTINE NAUTA

By JUSTINE NAUTA
justine_nauta@saipantribune.com
REPORTER

The homeless coalition is still accepting volunteers for its 4th annual Point-In-Time count that will be held on Jan. 25.

So far, a total of 75 volunteers attended the Commonwealth Homeless Coalition's orientation at the Pedro P. Tenorio Multi-Purpose Center last Jan. 17 and at the Northern Marianas Housing Corp. central office in Garapan last Jan. 18.

According to Northern Marianas Housing Corp. office manager Jacob Muña, they are still accepting volunteers to reach their goal of 120. He hopes that more volunteers will reach out to them before or on Jan. 22 so that they can conduct another orientation before the Point-In-Time count on Jan. 25.

"We're still grateful and thankful that the volunteers are setting some time aside to help us with this count," said Muña. "We're also hopeful that more people will volunteer."

The orientation informed volunteers on the basics of the count and its purpose.

According to Muña, the

point of the count is to obtain funding to assist individuals and families who are living in a place that isn't meant for human habitation and who are sleeping in an emergency or transitional shelter.

Muña stated that the Continuum of Care grant they are applying for will help assist people who meet the requirements with temporary apartments in hopes that they will take this opportunity to get back on their feet and turn their lives around.

The CNMI Homeless Prevention Coalition, in collaboration with NMHC, will be conducting the Point-In-Time count on Jan. 25 from 7am-12pm.

The count is a prerequisite for every community that receives federal funds for programs that aid the homeless, particularly the COC grant.

In 2018 alone, over 1,000 individuals were considered homeless by the Department of Housing and Urban Development definition. That means actual homelessness or living in a home unfit for human habitation.

If you would like to volunteer, contact Muña at (670) 483-9447.

Adrift mariner rescued in FSM

SANTA RITA, GUAM — The U.S. Coast Guard, U.S. Navy, U.S. Air Force, and Federated States of Micronesia Police rescued an adrift mariner off the Lukunor Atoll in the Mortlock Islands of Chuuk in the Federated States of Micronesia last Friday.

A Navy Commander Task Force 72 P-8 Poseidon aircrew located the 23-year-old mariner aboard his adrift, 16-foot white skiff, and vectored in the crew of the FSM patrol vessel FSS *Micronesia*. Their crew successfully recovered the mariner. He is reportedly in good health, and the FSS *Micronesia*'s team will return him to Lukunor Atoll.

Involved in the search were a Coast Guard Air Station Barbers Point HC-130 Hercules aircrew; the CTF-72 P-8 Poseidon aircrew; an Air Force 36th Wing B-52 Stratofortress aircrew, the crew of the FSS *Micronesia*; and local search parties.

At 7:38pm, Wednesday, JRSC Guam watchstanders received a report from the Federated States of Micronesia Police regarding the situation. Four fishers departed Lukunor

Atoll Monday to fish along the nearby Sopunur Island reef. Once there, three of the fishermen went ashore while the one stayed aboard the vessel at anchor.

Once done for the day, the three fishers returned to the location they anchored and found no sign of the boat. The fishers turned back to Lukunor Atoll, organized search parties, and notified the Federated States of Micronesia Police.

JRSC Guam and Joint Rescue Center Honolulu watchstanders coordinated with partners in the region to search and deployed the Hercules aircrew from Hawaii to search the area. Watchstanders also reached out to the Navy and Air Force, who agreed to assist.

Friday, the Navy P-8 aircrew used radar to locate the mariner's boat approximately 51 miles from his last known position. The aircrew then remained overhead until the FSS *Micronesia*'s crew arrived in the area and conducted the rescue.

The weather on scene was winds of 10 mph and seas up to 6 feet. (USCG)



- **January 29, 2020 - Tinian: 8:00am (Station 7)**
- **January 30, 2020 - Rota: 4:00pm (Station 8)**
- **February 01, 2020 - Saipan: 6:00am (Kilili Beach)**



The Department of Fire & Emergency Medical Services [DFEMS] Forestry Strike Team is looking for individuals for our Type II Handcrew applicants must be 18-yr. old and above. Applicants must be disciplined, reliable, physically fit, and are able to work hard under tough conditions. Must be able to work in the United States.

TEST: Applicants must complete a 3 mile walk (no running) with a 45 lbs. pack under a 45 minute time period.



Contact Person: Firefighter Ralph Magofna | Email: rilmagofna@dfemscnmi.com | Cell 670-483-7324

This ad has been paid for by the US Forest Service-State Fire Assistance Program.

Visitor arrivals up 95% in December

Arrivals to the Northern Marianas increased 95% to 52,297 visitors in December 2019, compared to 26,831 visitors received in December 2018, based on the latest numbers of the Marianas Visitors Authority.

According to the MVA, visitor arrivals in December 2018 were low due to the residual reduction in air service following Super Typhoon Yutu in October 2018.

Arrivals from Korea grew 372% year-on-year in December 2019 to 33,648, higher than even December 2017 (29,092 visitor arrivals). T'Way Air began a second daily daytime flights from Seoul, Incheon to Saipan on Nov. 21, 2019, which will continue through late March 2020. On Jan. 1, 2020, Asiana Airlines upgraded their aircraft service from Seoul, Incheon to A330 equipment with 298 seats, also continuing through late March 2020.

Arrivals from China decreased 37% to 9,974 visitors in December. In December, the number of available air seats between China and the Marianas dropped 40% compared to December 2017. Charter flights from Shanghai were reduced from four to two flights per week, and flights from Guangzhou were temporarily suspended beginning Dec. 2. Flights from Hong Kong by Hong Kong Airlines also remain suspended. China outbound travel to the U.S. has been dampened by the trade war with U.S. The market is also suffering from continued tension in Hong Kong, a tightened parole policy visa-free travel to the Marianas for Chinese tourists, and a continuing high exchange rate.

Visitor arrivals from Japan grew 448% to 5,165 visitors in December on the wings of daily, direct flights launched by Skymark Airlines on Nov. 29 from Tokyo-Narita to Saipan. Skymark is offering promotional rates starting at \$38 one way plus fuel surcharge. Approximately 40,000 visitors are expected from Japan in fiscal year 2020, based on 80% load factor on scheduled flights; this compares to 12,000 visitors from the source market in fiscal year 2019.

The MS *Asuka II* also berthed in Saipan on Dec. 31,

2019, with 857 passengers.

Economic highlights

In November 2019, the con-

sumer price index in China went up by 4.5% year-on-year. The overall outbound travel industry in China is

preparing for its annual pinnacle, from just about one week prior to the Chinese Lunar New Year celebrations

this month, with a lingering effect of up to two weeks afterwards.

Japan's consumer price

inflation rose to 0.5% year-on-year in November 2019 from 0.2% in the previous month. (PR)

NEW YEAR • NEW RIDES

20/20 UNDER 20k DEALS

\$0 DOWN NO PAYMENT FOR 90 DAYS



2020 CX-3 SPORT

STARTING AT

\$19,995





2020 ELANTRA SPORT

STARTING AT

\$19,995





2020 KONA

STARTING AT

\$19,995





2020 VENUE

STARTING AT

\$19,995





2020 MAZDA 3 SPORT

STARTING AT

\$19,995



STOCK#	DESCRIPTION	RETAIL	SALE
20D004	2020 MAZDA 3 SPORT 2.5L SEDAN, 6SPD AT	\$24,995	\$19,995
20D008	2020 MAZDA 3 SPORT 2.5L, 6SPD AT	\$24,995	\$19,995
20D018	2020 MAZDA CX-3 SPORT 2.0L SUV, 6SPD AT	\$24,995	\$19,995
20D020	2020 MAZDA CX-3 SPORT 2.0L SOLD	\$24,995	\$19,995
20D022	2020 MAZDA CX-3 CERAMIC 2.0L SUV, 6SPD AT	\$24,995	\$19,995
20D029	2020 MAZDA CX-3 TITANIUM FLASH 2.0L SUV, 6SPD AT	\$24,995	\$19,995
20D030	2020 MAZDA CX-3 ETERNAL BLUE FLASH 2.0L SUV, 6SPD AT	\$24,995	\$19,995
20H029	2020 HYUNDAI ELANTRA SE 2.0L SEDAN, 6SPD AT	\$22,995	\$18,995
20H033	2020 HYUNDAI ELANTRA SE 2.0L SEDAN, 6SPD AT	\$22,995	\$18,995
20H024	2020 HYUNDAI ELANTRA SEL 2.0L SEDAN, 6SPD AT	\$24,995	\$19,995
20H012	2020 HYUNDAI ELANTRA SPORT 2.0L SEDAN, 6SPD MT	\$27,995	\$19,995
20H019	2020 HYUNDAI ELANTRA SPORT 2.0L SEDAN, 6SPD AT	\$27,995	\$19,995
20H001	2020 HYUNDAI VELOSTER TURBO 1.6L 3 DR, TURBO, AT	\$29,995	\$19,995
20H087	2020 HYUNDAI VENUE 1.6L 5WGN 2WD 6 SPD AT	\$21,995	\$18,995
20H087	2020 HYUNDAI VENUE E EXOTIC GREEN	\$21,995	\$18,995
20H030	2020 HYUNDAI VENUE SPORT TURBO, 6SPD AT SOLD	\$22,995	\$19,995
20H009	2020 HYUNDAI KONA L 2.0L 5WGN 2WD 6 SPEED TRANS	\$24,995	\$19,995
20H074	2020 HYUNDAI KONA L 2.0L 5WGN 2WD 6 SPEED TRANS	\$24,995	\$19,995
20M046	2020 MITSUBISHI MIRAGE G4 TURBO, 6SPD AT SOLD	\$18,995	\$15,995
20M036	2020 MITSUBISHI MIRAGE SE 1.2L 5HB AUTO TRANS	\$18,995	\$15,995

Customers First



TRIPLE J MOTORS

MON-FRI: 8AM TO 6PM • SAT: 8AM TO 5PM

BEACH ROAD, CHALAN LAULAU

TEL: (670)234-7133/234-3051

WWW.TRIPLEJSAI PAN.COM

*On Approved Credit (OAC). Some Conditions Apply. Doc Fees and Registration not included. Cannot be combined with any other offers. Vehicles may not be exactly as shown. See dealer for more details.

Like us on



Triple J Motors, Saipan

Chance of a wildfire: High and increasing

The National Weather Service in Tiyan, Guam, warns that, as the Marianas gets deeper into the dry season, increase in the number and incidences of wildfires is to be expected.

In a short interview with NWS meteorologist Landon Aydlett, the wild-

fire threat for the Marianas is going up as conditions continue to dry out across the islands.

"We're much into the dry season. The fire dangers we have calculated here for Guam, which is pretty similar to Saipan, [is] at a high....As we

go into weeks of little to no rainfall, we're going to see that wildfire threat increase," he said.

Aydlett said the dry season for the Marianas is expected to persist up until May.

"As we go into the next few

months, we're going to see the grass get more brown and brittle [and] conditions will dry up. We're just going to watch that closely," he said.

As for any possible typhoons or disturbances, Aydlett said it has been very quiet across Micronesia.

"It's pretty quiet out there.

We're hard core into the dry, trade winds season so we're going to see mainly dry weather with the breezy trade winds. From time to time, you'll get some showery conditions but, as far as any major weather features, we don't see any for the next week or two," he said. **(Kimberly Bautista)**

ALABAMA

From Page 1

help of the King estate cites the stint as King's last time in jail.

King was assassinated about

five months later in Memphis, Tennessee.

A small area including two pale-green cells, an isolation chamber, a shower and mechanical equipment are all that remain from the old jail. The county doesn't know whether

King was held in that exact section or another section that has since been removed.

But commission member Lashunda Roberts-Scales said it was important to preserve what's left of the jail regardless since King was there.

that degrade into those chemicals.

In 3M Co.'s notice, Civille asserted that, as multiple courts have previously ruled in similar cases brought against AFFF, 3M is entitled to remove this action under the federal officer removal statute, to have its federal defense adjudicated in a federal forum.

The Commonwealth brought the lawsuit as "the trustee for the benefit of its citizens of all natural resources within its jurisdiction."

The Commonwealth alleges that the defendants marketed and sold these products to military facilities and other purchasers, and that these products were used or discharged at sites in the NMI.

The Commonwealth alleges, among other things, that the defendants' AFFF products were defectively designed, and asserts claims for strict products liability-design defect, strict products liability-failure to warn, negligence, and public nuisance.

The CNMI government seeks damages "for all costs to investigate, clean up and remove, restore, threat, monitor and otherwise respond to PFOS and PFOA contamination resulting from defendants' AFFF, so the contaminated natural resources are restored to their original condition."

The CNMI also seeks for damages to compensate CNMI residents for the lost use and value of these natural resources during all times of injury caused by PFOS and PFOA.

Civille said removal is proper under the federal officer removal statute, which provides for removal when a defendant is sued for acts undertaken at the direction of a federal officer.

Since the 1960s, Civille said, the U.S. military has used AFFF that meets military specifications on military bases, airfields, and Navy ships—settings where fuel fire are inevitable and potentially devastating—to train its personnel, put out fires, save lives, and protect property.

Indeed, the lawyer said, the U.S. Naval Research Laboratory developed AFFF in response to deadly, catastrophic fires aboard the aircraft carriers USS *Forrestal* in 1967 and USS *Enterprise* in 1969.

Decades later, Civille said, the Naval Research Laboratory described the development of AFFF as "one of the most far-reaching benefits to worldwide avia-

tion safety."

Civille said the manufacture and sale of AFFF procured by the military is governed by rigorous military specifications created and administered by Naval Sea Systems Command.

The lawyer said all such AFFF products must be "qualified for listing on the applicable Qualified Products List" prior to military procurement.

Prior to such listing, Civille said, a "manufacturer's products are examined, tested, and approved to be in conformance with specification requirements."

Civille said the MilSpec designates Naval Sea Systems Command as the agency responsible for applying these criteria and determining whether AFFF products satisfy the MilSpec's requirements.

The lawyer said that, from its inception and very recently, the MilSpec included the express requirement that MilSpec AFFF contain "fluorocarbon surfactants," the chemical class that includes PFOA and PFOS.

Civille said the current MilSpec expressly contemplates the presence of PFOA and PFOS (subject to recently imposed limits) in AFFF formulations.

Indeed, Civille said, the current MilSpec recognizes that it is not yet technically feasible for manufacturers to completely eliminate PFOA and PFOS "while still meeting all other military specification requirements."

Civille said the first requirement for removal under the federal officer removal statute is satisfied because 3M (a corporation) is a "person" under the statute.

The lawyer said the Commonwealth's own allegations acknowledge that 3M was "acting under" federal officers of the Department of Defense and its agencies when manufacturing and selling MilSpec AFFF products allegedly used in the NMI.

Civille said in designing, manufacturing, and supplying the MilSpec AFFF products at issue, 3M acted under the direction and control of one or more federal officers.

Civille said the AFFF products in question were subject to various tests by the U.S. Navy before and after being approved for use by the military and for inclusion on the Qualified Products List maintained by the U.S. Department of Defense.

The community needs to "recognize it past mistakes" to move forward, she said.

"We believe that the public should have the right, for educational purposes, to know about King's last movements before he was assassinated. That's very important to us," said Roberts-Scales. The county plans to convert the area into a tourist attraction that could open soon, she said.

An old jail log that includes King's name and that of his brother, A.D. King, hangs in a conference room at the office of Pettway, the first black sheriff in Jefferson County.

Pettway said he first saw the old jail after joining the department as

TAP

From Page 1

the NMI last Thursday.

Last Jan. 9, the Commonwealth Utilities Corp. announced that it has detected levels of perfluorooctane sulfonate (PFOS) and/or perfluorooctanoic acid (PFOA) that exceed the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency's health advisory level of 70 parts per trillion in an area of its drinking water system.

CUC identified the affected areas as villages of Chalan Lau-lau, Illiying, Chalan Kiya, As Terlaje, Kannat Tabla, Fina Sisu, Oleai, parts of southern Garapan, Gualo Rai, Susupe, As Lito, and As Perdido.

CUC then advised consumers in those areas at that time to avoid drinking the water and until the concentrations of PFOS and PFOA are below the health advisory level.

CUC said studies indicate that exposure to PFOA and PFOS over certain levels may result in adverse health effects, including developmental effects on fetuses during pregnancy or to breastfed infants, cancer, liver effects, immune effects, thyroid effects, and other effects.

CNMI's lawsuit seeks to hold the eight companies liable based on their alleged conduct in designing, manufacturing, and selling PFOA and PFOS, which are considered part of firefighting chemical agents that were developed for sale to the U.S. military and others.

The lawsuit wants to hold these companies liable for designing, manufacturing, and selling products containing PFOA and PFOS that were used or discharged at sites in the NMI.

The CNMI's lawsuit named as defendants the 3M Co., Tyco Fire Products LP, Chemguard Inc., Buckeye Fire Equipment Co., Kidde-Fenwal Inc., National Foam Inc., E.T. Du Pont De Nemours and Co., and the Chemours Co.

It was the 3M Co. that filed the notice of removal of the lawsuit from the Superior Court to the District Court, through counsel G. Patrick Civille.

In the lawsuit, the Commonwealth alleges that the defendants, including 3M, manufactured AFFF products containing PFOS and/or PFOA and/or compounds

an officer in 1999 but didn't realize its connection to King until a worker showed him the booking record recently. He called the jail remnants a "hidden treasure" that was largely forgotten.

"The last time he was arrested, the last time he was housed in a jail, it was in the county jail here in Jefferson County," said Pettway.

King was jailed multiple times while leading civil rights demonstrations, and the courthouse jail was separate from a city facility where King wrote his famous "Letter From Birmingham Jail" in 1963. Officials previously placed a historic marker at the site of that jail, which was demolished.

VIRAL

From Page 1

reportedly caused by a new type of coronavirus.

Given the high number of Chinese tourists who visit the CNMI, there is risk of an imported case but CHCC continues to monitor the situation closely and keep the public informed if there is an elevated threat level in the CNMI, the statement added.

Ongoing airport and port surveillance and passenger screening facilitated by the CHCC in collaboration with the Public Health Emergency Preparedness program, or PHEP, has been expanded to monitor potential import cases of the new disease.

CHCC spokesperson Zoe Travis told *Saipan Tribune* that PHEP is working with the CNMI Customs and Quarantine Office in screening incoming passengers from Asia, Guam, and other Micronesian islands for any ongoing infectious disease outbreaks, including the newly surfaced coronavirus.

"Questions to ask passengers have been provided to Customs and Quarantine officials, and an in-service for the questionnaire was conducted with all Customs and Quarantine officials by PHEP staff.

"If an incoming passenger is showing symptoms associated with certain infectious diseases, they are asked to provide some background information on their recent travels and may be referred to the CHCC for further evaluation and treatment if necessary. PHEP staff will also follow up and investigate further if needed," said Travis.

The last time the CNMI was faced with a similar viral threat from passengers was the SARS (severe acute respiratory syndrome) outbreak of 2002-2003, which precipitated a drastic drop in tourism numbers.

This latest case comes as China, Korea, and other Asian countries head into the Lunar New Year, typically a time when many people travel for the long holiday.

Three U.S. airports will screen passengers arriving from central China.

Centers for Disease Control and Prevention officials say they will begin taking temperatures and asking about symptoms of passengers at three U.S. airports who traveled from the outbreak city of Wuhan.

There have been 62 confirmed cases in China of the illness caused by the new coronavirus and one death in a patient who had significant underlying medical conditions. No additional cases in China have been detected since Jan. 3 but as of Jan. 16, two export cases of the disease have been confirmed in people who had recently traveled from Wuhan to Japan and Thailand.

Coronaviruses are a large family of viruses, some causing illness in people—or human coronaviruses—and others that affect animals—or animal coronaviruses.

It is very rare for animal coronaviruses to evolve and infect people but sometimes, they can also spread between people, although it is not confirmed yet whether the virus in China can be transmitted from person to person.

Most of the patients in the outbreak in Wuhan have had some link to a large seafood and animal market, suggesting that animals may be the source of this illness.

Symptoms of human coronaviruses are similar to common colds and are usually mild or moderate. Most people get infected with these viruses at some point in their lives, and these illnesses usually only last for a short amount of time. Symptoms may include a runny nose, headache, coughing, sore throat, fever, and a general feeling of being unwell.

More severe human coronaviruses can cause lower-respiratory tract illnesses like pneumonia or bronchitis. This is more common in high-risk groups, such as people with weakened immune systems, babies, and older adults. **(With AP)**

90 Korean students take part in English camp



JUSTINE NAUTA

Students of the Asia Pacific Center of English School pose with Saipan Mayor David M. Apatang at the Saipan Mayor's Office in Susupe last Jan. 17.

By JUSTINE NAUTA
justine_nauta@saipantribune.com
REPORTER

The Saipan Mayor's Office was inundated last Friday by 45 students from different parts of South Korea, who

are on the island as part of a program that is intended to polish their basic English-speaking skills.

There are actually 90 students under the Asia Pacific Center of English School who are visiting

the CNMI for a month but they had to be split into two groups in order to fit inside the Saipan Mayor's Office.

The students are from the 2nd to 9th grade and are all from different parts of South

Worker allegedly overstayed, got her driver's license through fraud

By FERDIE DE LA TORRE
ferdie_deltorre@saipantribune.com
REPORTER

U.S. Department of Homeland Security Investigations arrested last week an alleged overstaying Chinese national who presented a CNMI driver's license that she allegedly obtained through fraud.

Dingpin Kan was arrested on a charge of presenting a fraudulently obtained identification document to law enforcement personnel.

HSI special agent David

West stated that Kan came to the attention of federal authorities last Wednesday when she presented a CNMI driver's license to CNMI Customs inspection at the Saipan airport. Kan had gone the Port of Saipan to clear a cargo container that was recently shipped to the Saipan seaport from China.

The defendant paid the dues as the consignee for the shipment and the cargo container was held for inspection.

At the CNMI Customs inspection area, Customs inspector Vicente Sablan asked her for identification, and she presented a CNMI driver's license. Sablan allowed Kan to proceed into the cargo area of the seaport.

After clearing the cargo container, Kan was then interviewed by a Drug Enforcement Administration Task Force officer, during which Kan allegedly informed the officer that she is a citizen of China and has

no legal immigration status.

West said that a check with HSI confirmed that Kan has no immigration status and that the driver's license she had presented to Customs was obtained fraudulently.

West said that Bureau of Motor Vehicle informed an HSI Task Force officer that there was no information in the BMV system regarding that driver's license and that it was not issued by BMV.

The officer then notified DHS about the incident. At the HSI office, Kan was advised of her constitutional rights.

West said that, according to Kan, she came to the CNMI to work in 1998 and never obtained legal immigration status after U.S. immigration laws were enacted in the CNMI.

West said Kan admitted that she knew that she has no legal immigration status.

Kan claimed that she ob-

tained her driver's license in 2013 and renewed it sometime in 2016 at the BMV.

West said the defendant stated that her driver's license was expired and knew she could not renew it because she did not have any legal immigration status. The defendant learned that a friend could get her a new license for \$500.

In November 2019, as allegedly directed by the friend, Kan sent a copy of her passport with Kan's handwritten signature, a copy of her social security card, a passport photo, her expired driver's license, and \$500.

Approximately three to four days later, Kan received her new driver's license, showing it was issued on Nov. 19, 2019. Kan stated her new license had the same photo and signature that she had sent to her friend.

ARMATECH



Tel: (670) 234-8895 • Fax: (670) 234-8894

Mobile: (670) 287-5525 / (670) 783-8895

**THE GOAL MUST BE
ZERO
ACCIDENTS**

WUSHIN
Committed to Safety Excellence

LP GAS Since 1983

For your LP Gas needs, please call 322-7415 or 322-8733
Open from 8:00am – 5:00pm Monday to Friday | 8:00am – 2:00pm Saturday



JUSTINE NAUTA

Students of the Asia Pacific Center of English School pose with Saipan Mayor David M. Apatang at the Saipan Mayor's Office in Susupe last Jan. 17.

Korea.

Saipan Mayor David M. Apatang himself welcomed the first group last Friday and thanked them for participating in a beach cleanup at the Sugar Dock beach in Susupe while they are here.

"I hope you're enjoying your stay on the island. I know you...are picking up the trash and I want to thank you...for that and for also caring about our environment," he said.

Apatang, along with one of the coordinators, Judy Kim,

later presented the students with certificates to thank them for participating in beach cleanups.

According to Saipan Mayor's Office student exchange coordinator Yuki Kishimoto, they weren't able to fit the whole group into the conference room so they were split into two groups of 45 students each.

The first 45 students met with Apatang last Jan. 17 and the next group will also meet with him on Jan. 23.

According to one of the co-

ordinators of the Asian Pacific Center of English School, Yo Hon Park, the students are currently studying English, depending on their level of English skills, at Mount Carmel School.

Apatang encouraged the students to take lot of pictures so they can encourage their families and peers to visit the CNMI, too.

The group is being chaperoned by seven teachers and three coordinators from the Asia Pacific Center of English School.

Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands
OFFICE OF THE GOVERNOR
Bureau of Environmental and Coastal Quality

Bureau of Environmental and Coastal Quality
Eli D. Cabrera
Administrator

Division of Coastal Resources Management
P.O. Box 501304, Saipan, MP 96950
Tel.: (670) 664-8300; Fax: (670) 664-8315
www.dcrm.gov.mp



Janice E. Castro
Director, DCRM

PUBLIC NOTICE

From the COMMONWEALTH OF THE NORTHERN MARIANA ISLANDS COASTAL MANAGEMENT PROGRAM
of the CNMI'S DIVISION OF COASTAL RESOURCES MANAGEMENT

DATE: January 20, 2020

NOTICE: The Bureau of Environmental and Coastal Quality (BECQ) Division of Coastal Resources Management (DCRM) is currently reviewing a federal consistency determination request from the United States Department of the Navy regarding the Mariana Islands Training and Testing (MITT) Draft Supplemental Environmental Impact Statement/ Overseas Environmental Impact Statement (EIS/OEIS)

More information about the proposed activity can be accessed via the following website:
<https://dcrm.gov.mp/wp-content/uploads/crm/2019 DEC 13 U N465 1492 CNMI-DCRM-M-trn-ltr-16-DEC-19-TO-MS.-REYES.pdf> and
<https://dcrm.gov.mp/wp-content/uploads/crm/2019 DEC 10 U N465 1467 ENCL-TO-CNMI-DCRM-trn-ltr-10-DEC-19.pdf>

Federal consistency is a provision of the Coastal Zone Management Act (CZMA) that requires federal actions that affect the coastal zone to be consistent to the maximum extent practicable with the enforceable policies of a coastal state's federally approved coastal management plan. Comments on whether the project is consistent with the enforceable policies of the CNMI's coastal management program can be submitted to the Division of Coastal Resource Management at FedCon@dcrm.gov.mp.

This public notice has been published for compliance with 15 CFR § 930.42. DCRM is soliciting public comments for thirty (30) days, comment period began on January 7, 2020 and will end on February 7, 2020. This comment period has been extended to give the public a sufficient opportunity to develop and provide comments on whether the proposed project is consistent with management program enforceable policies. We welcome your feedback and thank you for your consideration.

Public-private partnership advances next gen fishermen

By IVA MAURIN
iva_maurin@saipantribune.com
REPORTER

Last Saturday was a treat for all members of the Saipan Fishermen's Association's Youth Fishing Club, who got rods and reels courtesy of Fishing Tackle and Sporting Goods, which donated the fishing equipment just as the club members are getting ready to venture into the open ocean in the next few weeks.

Pierre Lam and Catherine Lam, the owners of the Fishing Tackle and Sporting Goods, were on hand to turn over the donated equipment to Gov. Ralph DLG Torres and the club members.

In his speech at the brief turnover ceremony, Torres jokingly told the young, soon-to-be fishermen, "Make sure you catch fish, not blocks," which was met with thunderous laughter. "Enjoy, appreciate the water, appreciate our natural resources and take care of it, because what you put into it is what you're going to get out of it."

The club members are part of SFA's eight-month fish-



Saipan Fishermen's Association Youth Fishing Club members pose with Gov. Ralph DLG Torres and Fishing Tackle and Sporting Goods owners Pierre Lam and Catherine Lam last Saturday on Capital Hill. Fishing Tackle donated reels, rods, and shirts for the students to use as they go fishing.

IVA MAURIN

ing program for the youth and are composed of students of Da'ok Academy, Saipan Southern High School, Marianas High School, and Kagman High School.

Catherine Lam said the slogan of Fishing Tackle and Sporting Goods is "discover the joy of fishing," which is an apt motivation for them to make the donation.

"The next best thing to discovering the joy of fishing is sharing that joy with others and sharing it together," she said, adding that time spent fishing is time well-spent.

"We're here to support the events of fishing because it is time well-spent. It is productive. With this group, they will bond together in one same mission to discover the joy of fishing and to share that with others," Catherine Lam added.

MHS Fishing Club vice president Dhan Robles extended the club's thanks to SFA and Fishing Tackle.

"I'm thankful for my free fishing gear from SFA and all the sponsors. They will help benefit me and all the other young fishermen here. It will help us provide food for our family. Also, we can teach others [about] the way of fishing, so our culture doesn't die out, and so we can rely on nature and everything around



Fishing Tackle and Sporting Goods manager Pierre Lam, left, turns over the company's donation of fishing equipment to Gov. Ralph DLG Torres last Saturday on Capital Hill.

IVA MAURIN

us," he said.

Starting with just the Da'ok Academy in June of last year, the "Tasi to Table" youth fishing club has expanded to include three other high schools.

"Now, it's pretty much expanded, and is looking fun. Everybody's enjoying, everybody's on the boat with us, Fishing Tackle, other govern-

ment agencies, and all," SFA vice chair for outreach Alex Castro Jr. said. "There's no program like ours. We're the first one to do this. Like Cathy said in her speech, time spent fishing is time well spent. With that knowledge, you can teach the future generation or your friends, and family. It's pretty good to have a hobby

that can support your family, feed your family."

Aside from learning the rudiments of fishing, the students are also organizing the 1st Wahoo in the Marianas Fishing Tournament on Feb. 29, Saturday, all proceeds of which would go to the SFA Youth Fishing Club.

MHS student Bryant Dy, one of the students, advises people who want to be fishermen to "just go at it."

"If you really have a passion, stick [to] your passion as the ocean will give you rewards. Personally for me, I don't go fishing just to catch fish. I go fishing to hang out with my friends, to connect with family, connect with friends, and this the best feeling in the world," he added.

For more information about the SFA and the 1st Wahoo Fishing Tournament, contact SFA president Gene Weaver at 483-4363.

PROCUREMENT AND SUPPLY
COMMONWEALTH HEALTHCARE CORPORATION
REQUEST FOR PROPOSAL (RFP)
ADDENDUM
RFP20-CHCC/RESPIRATORY CARE-001A
SUBMISSION DEADLINE: February 11, 2020 TIME: 10:00 AM
"FOUR (4) PURITAN BENNETT 980 VENTILATORS & FISHER & PAYKEL 850 HUMIDIFIER BASE & STARTER KIT"
INTERESTED PARTIES CAN DOWNLOAD REQUEST FOR PROPOSAL (RFP) FROM THE CHCC WEBSITE [WWW.CHCC.GOV.MP]. ONCE AT THE SITE, NAVIGATE TO **RFP's TAB** ON THE BOTTOM NAVIGATION BAR. CLICK ON THE URL FOR THIS RFP. YOU WILL BE REQUIRED TO ENTER DATA TO ALLOW US TO TRACK ALL REQUESTS FOR THIS OPPORTUNITY.
THE CHCC RESERVES THE RIGHT TO REJECT ANY AND ALL PROPOSAL AND TO WAIVE ANY IMPERFECTIONS IN ANY PROPOSAL, IF TO DO SO SHALL BE IN THE INTEREST OF THE CHCC. ALL PROPOSALS SHALL BECOME THE EXCLUSIVE PROPERTY OF THE COMMONWEALTH HEALTHCARE CORPORATION.
*/S/ ESTHER L. MUNA
CHCC CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER* */S/ CORAZON P. ADA
CHCC DIRECTOR OF P&S*

Commonwealth Utilities Corporation
3rd Floor, Joeten Dandan Commercial Building
P.O. Box 501220 CK • Saipan, MP 96950-1220
Telephone: (670) 664-4282 • Facsimile: (670) 235-5131

PUBLIC NOTICE

Pursuant to the Open Government Act (1 CMC §9901 et seq), the Commonwealth Utilities Corporation ("CUC") Board of Directors hereby informs the general public that the Board will hold its regular board meeting on Thursday, January 23, 2020, at 10:00 a.m. The meeting will be held at the CUC Conference Room, Room 17, 3rd Floor, Joeten Dandan Building, Saipan. The following agenda will be considered and public attendance is welcome.

AGENDA

- I. Preliminary Matters
 - A. Call to Order
 - B. Roll Call
 - C. Adoption of Agenda
 - D. Adoption of Minutes
 - E. Correspondence
- II. Personnel Committee Report
- III. Old Business
 - A. Tinian Facility Takeover (Telesource)
 - B. Employee Survey
 - C. Net Metering Credit to Water Electric Charge
 - D. Organizational Chart
- IV. New Business
 - A. JVA Nos. 20-019 & 20-012
 - B. Review and Endorsement of Procurement Contacts
- V. Public Comments*
- VI. Executive Session**

(Consultation with Legal Counsel on Personnel Matters, Contracts, and Board Communications)
- VII. Announcements
- VIII. Adjournment

* Public comments are limited to 30 minutes and each remark is limited to three minutes. Everyone is welcome to submit written comments.

** Pursuant to 1 CMC § 9912, the Board of Directors may vote to meet in executive session at any time.

Commonwealth Utilities Corporation
3rd Floor, Joeten Dandan Commercial Building
P.O. Box 501220 CK • Saipan, MP 96950-1220
Telephone: (670) 664-4282 • Facsimile: (670) 235-5131

AMENDED PUBLIC NOTICE

Pursuant to the Open Government Act (1 CMC §9901 et seq), the Commonwealth Utilities Corporation ("CUC") Personnel Committee hereby informs the general public that an **Administrative Review Hearing** will be conducted on Wednesday, January 22, 2020, beginning at 10:00 a.m. at the CUC Conference Room, Room 17, 3rd Floor, Joeten Dandan Building.

ADMINISTRATIVE REVIEW HEARING

- I. Call to Order
- II. Roll Call

10:00 A.M. - Appeal of Corrective Action No. 20-0001CA
1:00 P.M. - Appeal of Grievance Action No. 20-0001G
2:00 P.M. - Appeal of Corrective Action No. 20-0002CA
3:00 P.M. - Appeal of Grievance Action No. 20-0002G
- III. Adjournment.

Oliver M. Manglona (F0489)
Attorney at Law
Plata Drive, Whispering Palms (Chalan Kiya)
P.O. Box 7862 SVRB, Saipan, MP 96950
Tel: (670) 285-3750 | Fax: (670) 234-5749

Attorney for Petitioner Joseph S. Hocog

IN THE SUPERIOR COURT OF THE COMMONWEALTH OF THE NORTHERN MARIANA ISLANDS

Civil Action No. 20-0010
IN THE MATTER OF THE ESTATE OF LUIS TOVES HOCOG, NOTICE OF HEARING ON VERIFIED PETITION FOR LETTERS OF ADMINISTRATION AND APPOINTMENT OF ADMINISTRATOR; and NOTICE TO CREDITORS
MANUEL C. ARRIOLA, Deceased. Judge: Camacho, Date: February 6, 2020 Time: 10:00 a.m. Courtroom: Supreme Court

TO: THE GENERAL PUBLIC, ANY HEIRS, CLAIMANTS, OR CREDITORS OF THE LATE LUIS TOVES HOCOG OR HIS ESTATE:
NOTICE IS HEREBY GIVEN that Petitioner Glenn S. Arriola, has petitioned the Superior Court of the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands to issue Letters of Administration for the Estate of Luis Toves Hocog, Decedent. The attorney for Petitioner is Oliver Manglona, Attorney at Law, whose address is Plata Drive, Chalan Kiya, P.O. Box 7862 SVRB, Saipan, MP 96950.

The hearing on the Petition for Letters of Administration by Josephine S. Hocog, as Petitioner, is scheduled to be heard on **February 6, 2020 at 10:00 a.m.** at the Superior Court of the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands, Guma Hustisa, Civic Center, Saipan, Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands. All interested persons or entities should appear at this hearing.

Any and all persons, creditors, or entities having claims against the Decedent or his Estate are hereby required by law to file their claims with the Clerk of Court within Sixty (60) days of the first publication, or the claim(s) will be barred. A copy of your claim should also be sent to OLIVER M. MANGLONA, Attorney at Law, at the address herein-above indicated.

Dated this 13th day of January, 2020

/s/ Clerk of Court/Deputy Clerk of Court

Oliver M. Manglona
Attorney at Law
Whispering Palms (Chalan Kiya)
P.O. Box 7862 SVRB, Saipan, MP 96950
Tel: (670) 285-3750 | Fax: (670) 234-5749
Attorney for Petitioner Glenn S. Arriola

IN THE SUPERIOR COURT FOR THE COMMONWEALTH OF THE NORTHERN MARIANA ISLANDS

Civil Action No. 20-0010
IN THE MATTER OF THE ESTATE OF LUIS TOVES HOCOG, NOTICE OF HEARING ON VERIFIED PETITION FOR LETTERS OF ADMINISTRATION AND APPOINTMENT OF ADMINISTRATOR; and NOTICE TO CREDITORS
MANUEL C. ARRIOLA, Deceased. Judge: Camacho, Date: February 6, 2020 Time: 10:00 a.m. Courtroom: Supreme Court

TO: THE GENERAL PUBLIC, ANY HEIRS, CLAIMANTS, OR CREDITORS OF THE LATE LUIS TOVES HOCOG OR HIS ESTATE:
NOTICE IS HEREBY GIVEN that Petitioner Glenn S. Arriola, has petitioned the Superior Court of the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands to issue Letters of Administration for the Estate of Luis Toves Hocog, Decedent. The attorney for Petitioner is Oliver Manglona, Attorney at Law, whose address is Plata Drive, Chalan Kiya, P.O. Box 7862 SVRB, Saipan, MP 96950.

The hearing on the Petition for Letters of Administration by Glenn S. Arriola, as Petitioner, is scheduled to be heard on Thursday, February 6, 2020 at 10:00 a.m. at the Superior Court of the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands, Guma Hustisa, Civic Center, Saipan, Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands. All interested persons or entities should appear at this hearing.

Any and all persons, creditors, or entities having claims against the Decedent or his Estate are hereby required by law to file their claims with the Clerk of Court within Sixty (60) days of the first publication, or the claim(s) will be barred. A copy of your claim should also be sent to OLIVER M. MANGLONA, Attorney at Law, at the address herein-above indicated.

Dated this 15th day of January, 2020.

/s/ Judge Camacho, Joseph Norita

HK Express stops pregnancy screening for Saipan travelers

HONG KONG (AP)—The airline Hong Kong Express has apologized for having required some female passengers bound for the U.S. territory of Saipan to take pregnancy tests.

The low-cost carrier said in a statement Friday that it began requiring such tests in February 2019, after concerns were raised by Saipan authorities, to ensure U.S. immigration laws were not “undermined.”

“We would like to apologize unreservedly to anyone who has been affected by this,” it said.

“Under our new management, we recognize the significant concerns this practice has caused. We have immediately suspended the practice while we review it,” it said.

The U.S. has been seeking to

Lions Club presents Zumba and health screening

By JUSTINE NAUTA
justine_nauta@saipantribune.com
REPORTER

In this March 26, 2019, file photo, passengers wait at the check-in counter of Hong Kong Express Airways at the Hong Kong International Airport.

The Saipan Alliance Lions Clubs will be hosting their 2nd Annual Zumballiance on Jan. 25, from 5pm to 8pm, at the Round House in Garapan Central Park, as part of its campaign that health and fitness is intended for all ages.

The Zumballiance will be held in collaboration with the Division of Public Health's Cervical Cancer Prevention Program and will have free health screenings that includes a blood pressure check and blood sugar test, plus a diabetes awareness campaign that will be assisted by Marianas Medical Center volunteers.

There is a \$5 registration

prevent travelers, especially from China, from heading to Saipan and other American territories to give birth and potentially gain U.S. citizenship for their babies. The issue surfaced after a Japanese passenger complained late last year that she felt “humiliated” when she was required to undergo such a test while traveling to the island.

Midori Nishida, who lives in Tokyo but grew up in Saipan, said that while preparing to board her flight she was taken to a public restroom and handed a pregnancy test, which came out negative.

“Satisfied that I had no baby in me, the airline staff finally issued me a boarding pass,” Nishida said in comments published by the *Saipan Tribune*.

“I am truly appalled by the

NOTICE OF ZONING BOARD PUBLIC HEARING

for
Success International Corporation
dba New Hope Rock Quarry

The Public is invited to attend and provide comments at a Zoning Board public hearing on this request for Conditional Use Permit. Success International Corporation dba New Hope Rock Quarry is proposing to operate an Industrial Use (Mining). This use is classified as “Industrial” and is permitted in the district as a Conditional Use. This project is located on Lot No. 011 C 04 in As Matius village. This area is zoned as Mixed Commercial.

Date : January 23, 2020

Time : 5:00 pm

Place : Governor Pedro P. Tenorio Multi-purpose Center Building Susupe, Saipan

Comments on the proposal may be submitted orally or in writing at the public hearing. Written comments may be submitted directly to the Zoning Office before 4:30 pm, January 22, 2020. Please send written comments via e-mail to yubert.alepuyo@zoning.gov.mp, via US mail to Caller Box 10007, Saipan, MP 96950, or deliver them to the Zoning Office, 2nd floor, Joeten Building, Dandan, Saipan.

For questions or access to materials to be considered at the public hearing, or if you require assistance, please call 234-9661. This notice is provided pursuant to Public Law 6-32, as amended (2 CMC 7201, et seq.) and the Saipan Zoning Law of 2013.

/s/ Mariano Taitano, Chairman



Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands
HEALTH CARE PROFESSIONS LICENSING BOARD
P.O. Box 502078, Bldg., 1242 Pohnpei Court
Capitol Hill, Saipan, MP 96950
Tel No: (670) 664-4809 Fax: (670) 664-4814
Email: cnnibpl@cnmibpl-hcplb.net
Website: cnmibpl-hcplb.net

Pursuant to P.L. 8-41, Section 11, Governor Ralph DLG. Torres and Lt. Governor Arnold I. Palacios, through the Health Care Professions Licensing Board (HCPLB) are hereby giving notice that it will hold its regular monthly board meeting on **Wednesday, January 22, 2020 at 8am** on Saipan. The meeting will be held at the Board's Conference Room, Capitol Hill.

AGENDA

- I. Meeting Call to Order
- II. Determination of Quorum
- III. Review and Adoption of Agenda
- IV. Review and Adoption of Minutes (12/19/19)
- V. Public Comments
- VI. Chairman's Report
 1. Letter from Dr. Kohnen
- VII. Director's Report
 1. EAGI Senate Hearing for Dr. Warren Creed
 2. OPA Statement of Financial Interest
 3. Update on the Hearing Officer
 4. Update on the Independent Monitoring Reviewer
 5. Upgrading on the Office Computer Workstations
 6. Office Building Roof Repair
 7. Financial Report – 1st Quarter
- VIII. Investigator's Report
- IX. Communications from the Governor's Office & Legislature
 - A. Governor's Office
 1. Appointment Letters for Dr. Martin Rohringer
 2. Appointment Letters for Dr. Glenda George
 - B. Legislature
- X. Old Business
- XI. New Business
- XII. Pending Applications for Board's Review
 - A. New Applications
 - B. Renewal Applications
 - C. Miscellaneous Business
- XIV. Executive Session: The Board may vote to meet in executive session to consult with Counsel on pending or anticipated legal matters.
- XV. Announcements
 - A. Off-Island Meeting Schedules for HCPLB
 - B. Next Meeting Date
 - C. Adjournment of Meeting

/s/ Theodore R. Parker, R.Ph., MPH
Chairman

NOTICE OF ZONING BOARD PUBLIC HEARING

for
Integrated Development Corporation
dba Ahbhuh Auto Care Center

The Public is invited to attend and provide comments at a Zoning Board public hearing on this request for Conditional Use Permit. Integrated Development Corporation dba Ahbhuh Auto Care Center is proposing to operate an Auto Shop. This use is classified as “Vehicle Repair, General” and is permitted in the district as a Conditional Use. This project is located on TR. 21863-13 in Dandan village. This area is zoned as Mixed Commercial.

Date : January 23, 2020

Time : 5:00 pm

Place : Governor Pedro P. Tenorio Multi-purpose Center Building Susupe, Saipan

Comments on the proposal may be submitted orally or in writing at the public hearing. Written comments may be submitted directly to the Zoning Office before 4:30 pm, January 22, 2020. Please send written comments via e-mail to yubert.alepuyo@zoning.gov.mp, via US mail to Caller Box 10007, Saipan, MP 96950, or deliver them to the Zoning Office, 2nd floor, Joeten Building, Dandan, Saipan.

For questions or access to materials to be considered at the public hearing, or if you require assistance, please call 234-9661. This notice is provided pursuant to Public Law 6-32, as amended (2 CMC 7201, et seq.) and the Saipan Zoning Law of 2013.

/s/ Mariano Taitano, Chairman

NOTICE OF ZONING BOARD PUBLIC HEARING

for
Crispin M. Sablan dba Marianas Counseling Services

The Public is invited to attend and provide comments at a Zoning Board public hearing on this request for Conditional Use Permit. Crispin M. Sablan dba Marianas Counseling Services is proposing to operate an Office Use. This use is classified as “Office Use” and is permitted in the district as a Conditional Use. This project is located on TR. 22507-R3 in Chalan Kanoa village. This area is zoned as Rural.

Date : January 23, 2020

Time : 5:00 pm

Place : Governor Pedro P. Tenorio Multi-purpose Center Building Susupe, Saipan

Comments on the proposal may be submitted orally or in writing at the public hearing. Written comments may be submitted directly to the Zoning Office before 4:30 pm, January 22, 2020. Please send written comments via e-mail to yubert.alepuyo@zoning.gov.mp, via US mail to Caller Box 10007, Saipan, MP 96950, or deliver them to the Zoning Office, 2nd floor, Joeten Building, Dandan, Saipan.

For questions or access to materials to be considered at the public hearing, or if you require assistance, please call 234-9661. This notice is provided pursuant to Public Law 6-32, as amended (2 CMC 7201, et seq.) and the Saipan Zoning Law of 2013.

/s/ Mariano Taitano, Chairman

Midea® ELECTRIC

Lunar New Year

Promotion

New Arrival on Hot Sale

10%-20% OFF
for air conditioning

MIDEA AIRCONDITIONING
AUX BRAND AIRCONDITIONING

FREEZER
REFRIGERATOR
WASHER
LED ITEMS
RICE COOKER
ELECTRIC FAN
SOLAR LIGHT
TV SMART 32" TO 55"
FAUCETS
HARDWARE
HOME APPLIANCES
RECHARGEABLE SPEAKER ETC.

WE DO WHOLESALE

All rechargeable speakers have bluetooth.
Lowest price is down to \$13.99

HAO'S AIR CONDITIONING

Phone: 234-0680 / 285-0680 Fax: 234-0688
For more info, check us at the store.
INSTALLMENT AVAILABLE

Located at CK across the U.S. Post Office



Taiwan's Next TV anchor Isabella Chen shares about overcoming her fear of swimming after snorkeling at Grotto on Dec. 16, 2019.

PHOTOS BY MVA



Media from Taiwan learn about celestial navigation from 500 Sails on Dec. 18, 2019.

MVA brings Taiwanese media to the Marianas

To promote the Marianas to travelers from Taiwan, the Marianas Visitors Authority organized a familiarization tour with Taiwanese media to Saipan, Tinian, and Rota on Dec. 15-22, 2019.

The group included representatives of Next TV and ET Today. Next TV will produce two programs on the visit expected to generate \$900,000 in media value when distributed via their official website, social media, and YouTube channels. The tour was also joined by Intern to The Marianas Yu Chia "Alex" Liu, who was selected from among 350 contestants to help promote the Marianas in Taiwan.

"Taiwan is an important source market for the Marianas due to its proximity and the fact that the Taiwanese can travel here without a visa," said MVA managing director Priscilla M. Iakopo. "We continue to work toward building awareness and demand for the Marianas in Taiwan through media [familiarization] tours such as this, along with many

other marketing projects such as participation in trade fairs and travel shows, Marianas seminars, social media, and more."

The tour itinerary began with making coconut candy and *mwaar* (flower head leis) and painting with banana stalks at Saipan World Resort, led in part by PDI managing director Gordon Marciano. 500 Sails executive director Peter Perez was interviewed about the organization's efforts to revive the construction and use of traditional Micronesia sailing canoes in the Marianas. The group dove at Lau Lau Beach with a Wave Dive Trip guide and snorkeled at Grotto with Saipan Adventure instructors.

"The team was amazed by the cleanliness underwater and live sea creatures," said Iakopo. "They were also interested in and interviewed our staff about the Beautify My Marianas project, highlighting our efforts to protect the local environment."

2019 Miss Marianas Shannon Sasamoto welcomed the group to her family home to participate in making and enjoying traditional Chamorro dishes, including titiyas, koko, chicken kelaguen, and fried reef fish. After an impromptu invitation later in the visit, the group also enjoyed a casual family barbecue at Paupau Beach with MVA marketing specialist Hillary Agulto, who was their guide on Saipan.

A tour of Imperial Pacific International Casino was taken, including an inspection of luxury villas and a welcoming dinner at Chairman M restaurant. The group also visited Revolving Restaurant 360 and took a sunset cruise aboard *Jade Lady* and a 30-minute discovery flight around Saipan with Star Marianas. At Marianas Creations, the group interviewed the owner of the bar, café, and Marianas-made souvenir shop. Other sites visited included Santa Lourdes Shrine, Banzai Cliff, Last Command Post,



Media from Taiwan visit the ancient Chamorro archeological site House of Taga on the island of Tinian in The Marianas on Dec. 19, 2019.

and Garapan Street Market, and Mt. Tapochao, the highest point on island.

On Tinian, the group interviewed historian Don Farrell about the island's rich prehistoric and World War II history before visiting the giant limestone monoliths of the ancient Chamorro House of Taga site and the atomic bomb loading pits, Runway Able, and other World War II sites. MVA Tinian Field Operations supervisor Vida Borja personally led the group on a excursion to find—and sample—the is-

land's famously spicy *donni sali* hot pepper.

On Rota, students of Dr. Rita Hocog Inos Jr./Sr. High School welcomed the group with a traditional dance at

Teteto Beach. The group visited the Japanese-era sugar mill, As Nieves Latte Stone Quarry, and Swimming Hole and lodged at Rota Resort and Country Club. (MVA)



Students from Rota welcome media from Taiwan on Dec. 20, 2019.



2019 Miss Marianas Shannon Sasamoto, left, hosts Taiwan's Next TV anchor Isabella Chen for dinner at her family home on Dec. 19, 2019.

USCIS: Countries eligible for H-2A and H-2B visa programs

U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services and the Department of Homeland Security, in consultation with the Department of State, announced Friday the list of countries whose nationals are eligible to participate in the H-2A and H-2B visa programs in 2020. The notice listing the eligible countries was published in the Federal Register on Jan. 17, 2020.

For 2020, the acting secretary of Homeland Security has determined, with the concurrence of the Office of the Secretary of State, that the countries designated as eligible in 2019 will remain unchanged.

DHS maintains its authority to add countries to the eligible countries list at any time, and to remove any country whenever DHS and DOS determine that a country fails to meet the requirements for continued designation. Examples of factors that could result in the exclusion of a country or the removal of a country from the

Effective Jan. 19, 2020, na-

list include fraud, abuse, denial rates, overstay rates, human trafficking concerns, and other forms of noncompliance with the terms and conditions of the H-2 visa programs by nationals of that country.

The H-2A and H-2B visa programs allow U.S. employers to bring foreign nationals to the United States to fill temporary agricultural and non-agricultural jobs, respectively. Typically, USCIS approves H-2A and H-2B petitions only for nationals of countries that the secretary of Homeland Security has designated as eligible to participate in the programs. However, USCIS may approve H-2A and H-2B petitions, including those that were pending as of the date of the Federal Register notice, for nationals of countries not on the list on a case-by-case basis only if doing so is determined to be in the interest of the United States.

Effective Jan. 19, 2020, na-

tionals of the following countries are eligible to receive H-2A and H-2B visas:

- Andorra
- Argentina
- Australia
- Austria
- Barbados
- Belgium
- Brazil
- Brunei
- Bulgaria
- Canada
- Chile
- Colombia
- Costa Rica
- Croatia
- Czech Republic
- Denmark
- Dominican Republic*
- Ecuador
- El Salvador
- Estonia
- Fiji
- Finland
- France
- Germany
- Greece
- Grenada
- Guatemala
- Honduras
- Hungary
- Iceland
- Ireland
- Israel
- Italy
- Jamaica
- Japan
- Kiribati
- Latvia
- Liechtenstein
- Lithuania
- Luxembourg
- North Macedonia
- Madagascar
- Malta
- Moldova*
- Mozambique
- Mexico
- Monaco
- Mongolia
- Montenegro
- Nauru
- The Netherlands
- Nicaragua
- New Zealand
- Norway
- Panama
- Paraguay*
- Papua New Guinea

- Peru
- Poland
- Portugal
- Romania
- Samoa
- San Marino
- Serbia
- Singapore
- Slovakia
- Slovenia
- Solomon Islands
- South Africa
- South Korea
- Spain
- St. Vincent and the Grenadines
- Sweden
- Switzerland
- Taiwan**
- Thailand
- Timor-Leste
- Tonga
- Turkey
- Tuvalu
- Ukraine
- United Kingdom
- Uruguay
- Vanuatu

Moldova, Paraguay, and the

Dominican Republic are eligible to participate in the H-2A program, but they are not eligible to participate in the H-2B program.

Regarding all references to "country" or "countries," it applies to Taiwan and is considered consistent with the United States' one-China policy, under which the United States has maintained unofficial relations with Taiwan since 1979.

This does not affect the status of H-2 beneficiaries who currently are in the United States unless they apply to extend their status. It does apply to nonimmigrants changing status in the United States to H-2A or B. Each country's designation is valid, subject to removal for failure to meet the requirements for continued designation, from Jan. 19, 2020, until Jan. 18, 2021.

For more information on these programs, see the H-2A Temporary Agricultural Workers and H-2B Temporary Non-Agricultural Workers pages on the USCIS website. (PR)

COMMUNITY BRIEFS

SHRM membership meeting set

The Society for Human Resource Management-NMI Chapter will have a general membership meeting on February 7, Friday, with the venue to be announced later. The meeting starts at 9am with the induction of the 2020 NMI SHRM board members.

Guest trainer will be Fran Sepler, president of Sepler & Associates. Sepler is best known for her pioneering work in harassment prevention and workplace investigations.

Training topics:

■ 9:30am – 12:30pm: "Respect in the Workplace." Based on values of respect and fairness, this training focuses on skill building for employees such as: bystander intervention and giving and getting feedback

■ 1:30pm – 5:30pm: "Leading for Respect." Learn how to respond appropriately to concerns and complaints made by employees, focusing on the employee's perceptions of fairness and the supervisor's responsibility to respond with emotional intelligence

This training includes lunch and costs \$50 for SHRM members and \$60 for non-SHRM members. Reserve your seat by contacting Roman Tudela at tudela.roman@gmail.com or Denise Montenegro at denise.montenegro@hyatt.com

SHRM is the world's largest association devoted to human resource management. The NMI Chapter is affiliated with the national organization. (PR)

Water service outage in parts of Gualo Rai

There will be a scheduled

water service interruption for portions of Gualo Rai mainly for customers located along Gualo Rai Road on the west side of the Gualo Rai traffic light on Saturday, Jan. 25, 2020, from 8am to 5pm. Commonwealth Utilities Corp. customers in the affected areas should expect restoration of water services soon after.

The purpose of this water interruption is to allow CUC's contractor, AIC Marianas Inc., to connect the new 8-inch distribution main to the existing 16-inch main as part of CUC's Gualo Rai Waterline Replacement Project funded by U.S. Environmental Protection Agency. As a result of the waterline replacement, a more reliable water system will be provided to the community.

CUC continues to work diligently to minimize any inconvenience to its customers. For more information, contact the CUC Customer Call Center (664-4282) or monitor its Facebook page for the latest updates. (PR)

US Naval Base Guam to close main gate evenings and weekends

SANTA RITA, Guam—Beginning Jan. 22, the U.S. Naval Base Guam main gate will be closed during the weekdays in the evenings and all day Saturday and Sunday in support of ongoing base construction upgrades.

During the closure, the back gate along Route 2A will be open for inbound and outbound traffic, while the Commercial Vehicle Inspection Gate located behind the Visitor Control Center will be

on the weekends.

The gate opening and closure schedule is as follows:

MAIN GATE:

- Open, Monday to Friday, from 6am to 5:30pm
- Closed, Monday to Friday nightly from 5:30pm to 6am
- Closed, Friday at 6pm to Monday at 6am

BACK GATE:

Open for inbound and outbound traffic, Monday to Sunday, 24 hours a day.

COMMERCIAL GATE:

- Open, Monday to Friday from 6am to 8am for high traffic only
- (No commercial vehicles.)
- Open, Monday to Friday from 8am to 4pm for commercial vehicles only.
- Open for inbound for personally owned vehicles and commercial

vehicle traffic on Saturday and Sunday from 8am to 5pm

The construction work is in support of the placement of a new sanitary sewerline from Polaris Point to the NBG Wastewater Treatment Plant in accordance with U.S. Environmental Protection Agency requirements. The main gate will be impacted by this construction until May 2020.

During the closure, there will be increased traffic around base and delays in base access.

All patrons are advised to plan accordingly and to monitor NBG social media for updates. (PR)

US Naval Base Guam extends base sponsorship to VHIC holders

SANTA RITA, Guam—Effective Jan. 21, U.S. Naval

Base Guam will begin extending sponsorship privileges for veterans who fall under the John S. McCain National Defense Authorization Act.

The new sponsorship privileges will allow authorized veteran card holders to sponsor up to three guests with valid identification onto NBG installations.

Veterans must have a Veterans Health Identification Card registered with the NBG Visitor Control Center into the Defense Biometric Identification System to request for sponsorship.

All guests requesting access to NBG properties must present a REAL ID-compliant identification card when applying for access at the VCC and must complete all base access requirements. Guests who do not have a REAL ID may request base access by presenting a valid U.S. passport as an authorized alternate identification.

For a full list of documents you can use to apply for a REAL ID go to <https://www.guamtax.com/help/realID-policy.html>.

Guests must be accompanied by their sponsor at all times and cannot be left unattended or sponsor privileges may be revoked.

The NBG VCC Guest Services hours of operation are Monday to Friday, 9am to 4pm and every other Wednesday from 9am to 2pm. The NBG VCC Contractor Services hours of operation are Monday to Friday, 7am to 4pm and every other Wednesday from 7am to 2pm.

Both contractor and guest services are closed on week-

ends and federal holidays.

Veterans with questions regarding the base sponsorship program are encouraged to contact the VCC at 339-6217/5208/1280/1380. (PR)

Military trainings set

ASAN, Guam—The U.S. Navy will conduct training from 9am to 5pm Jan. 20 in Agat Bay. Residents and boat operators in surrounding areas should not be alarmed if they see or hear increased activity associated with the training.

The U.S. Navy will conduct training from 11am to 11:55pm on Jan. 21-23 in Dandan-Malojloj, Radio Barrigada, and South Finegayan, Dededo. Residents in surrounding areas should not be alarmed if they see or hear increased activity associated with the training.

The U.S. Navy will conduct training from 2pm to 11:55pm on Jan. 21 in Warning Area 517. All vessels are advised to remain clear of the area as this training will be accompanied by the use of lasers and live ammunition.

The U.S. Navy will conduct training from 5pm to 11:55pm on Jan. 21 in W-517. All vessels are requested to remain clear of the training area as this training will be accompanied by the use of lasers.

The U.S. Navy will also conduct training from 5pm to 11:55pm on Jan. 23 in Outer Apra Harbor.

The U.S. Navy will also conduct training from 5pm to 11:55pm on Jan. 23 in Outer Apra Harbor.

These trainings will be accompanied by the use of blanks.

These types of trainings are designed to enhance the readiness of military personnel. Residents and boat operators in surrounding areas should not be alarmed if they see or hear increased activity associated with the trainings.

It is recommended the public, fishermen, and marine tour operators also monitor the U.S. Coast Guard broadcast notice to mariners for advisories. (PR)

Opinion

Saipan Tribune

THE CNMI'S FIRST DAILY NEWSPAPER

Volume XXX, Issue No. 12

Published daily at 2/F JP Center,
Beach Road, Garapan, Saipan, CNMI
Mailing Address: PMB 34, Box 10001, Saipan, MP, 96950

Jayvee L. Vallejera EDITOR
editor@saipantribune.com

Mark Rabago ASSOCIATE EDITOR
mark_rabago@saipantribune.com

MEMBER

AP The Associated Press

Pacific Islands News Association

EDITORIAL

These are the hottest years in modern history and we're doing nothing about it

New data released Wednesday—ironically, by the climate-change-denying Trump administration—show that the last decade was the hottest since such recordkeeping began in 1880, and that 2019 was the world's second-warmest year in that same period. (The hottest was in 2016.)

This news is less a surprise than it is an affirmation of the known: By burning fossil fuels for energy, people are radically altering the habitability of the planet. It's too late to avoid the effects of climate change, which are already upon us, but if we hope to forestall the most devastating consequences, we must take immediate and concerted action to put the brakes on what seems more and more to be a runaway train.

Yet the world dithers. President Trump's legacy of black marks will be led by his abject refusal to recognize the science of climate change, and his decision to expand the kinds of policies that created and are exacerbating this terribly urgent problem. Blame also falls on his supporters who deny the problem, or, worse still, those who recognize it but worry more about the short-term economic or political costs of addressing climate change than about the future costs of inaction. Without action, we can expect rising seas to wash out more than a \$1 trillion worth of buildings and infrastructure in the U.S. alone. Bigger and more powerful storms, hurricanes and wildfires that will devastate communities around the world. Worsened droughts and flooding that, when combined with localized temperature spikes, will make portions of the Earth all but uninhabitable for humans.

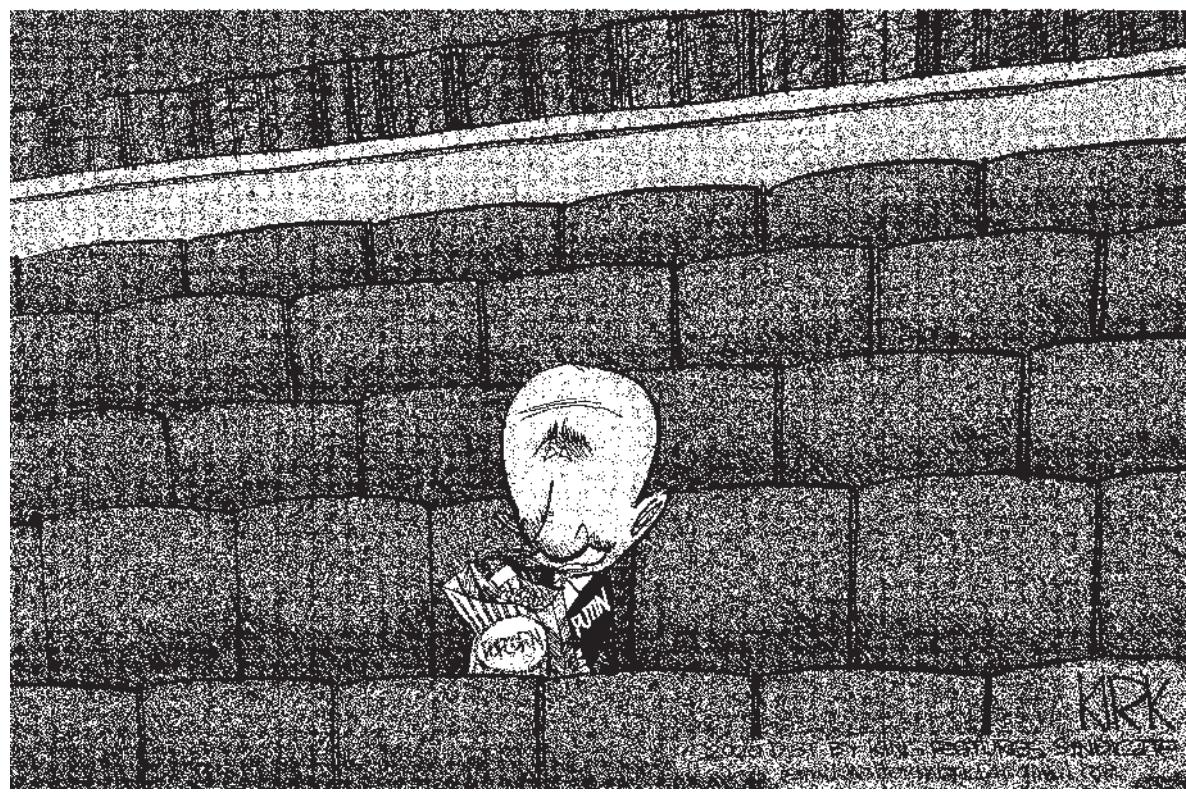
Just over four years ago, the world's nations met in Paris and agreed to take steps to try to hold the rise in global temperatures to 1.5 degrees Celsius above preindustrial levels, which scientists said was critical if we were to avoid the worst effects of global warming. But little progress has been made. In fact, global greenhouse gas emissions hit a record high last year. Instead of working to protect the planet by making the agreement stronger, Trump has moved the United States in the opposite direction, to its shame, and has begun the process of withdrawing from the agreement.

The Democratic contenders to unseat Trump in the 2020 election all recognize the overwhelming significance of climate change and have laid out plans for ratcheting back emissions. Yet none of those proposals are sufficient to address a problem that is getting worse faster than scientists realized just a few years ago. Nor has the issue received the global attention it demands. Yes, there are popular campaigns and some governments that have made efforts to roll back their emissions, and in some cases, there's been real progress (Costa Rica, for instance, generates nearly all of its electricity using renewable resources, primarily hydroelectric plans). Yet they are far from sufficient.

Global warming is neither a scientific abstraction nor a future event that we can ignore. We must act now, and with urgency, to address it. Because there is no other acceptable option.

(c)2020 Los Angeles Times

THE CURTAIN RISES ON TRUMP'S IMPEACHMENT TRIAL



Does the United States still need Middle East oil?

In 1974 President Richard Nixon declared, "At the end of this decade, in the year 1980, the United States will not be dependent on any other country for the energy we need."

So when President Donald Trump recently said, "We are independent, and we do not need Middle East oil," did he finally accomplish what his eight predecessors vowed to do?

Not exactly. We're much less dependent on Middle East oil than we used to be, yes, but not entirely so—and in fact, we can't be.

For starters, oil is a globally traded commodity. Whether the U.S. is a net importer or exporter of oil, we cannot completely insulate Americans from price volatility any more than U.S. self-sufficiency in orange or coffee production will prevent supply problems in other parts of the world from affecting domestic prices.

The price of crude oil makes up slightly more than half of the price for a gallon of gasoline. A number of factors around the world affect the supply of and demand for oil, which in turn affects the price Americans pay at the pump.

The Middle East, led by Saudi Arabia, still plays a huge role. A third of the world's oil passes through the Strait of Hormuz daily. Major supply disruptions can still inflict a lot of economic pain on American consumers and the economy.

Because of the global connectedness of oil markets, the U.S. still imported about 9.94 million barrels of petroleum in 2018 from 90 different countries. That's not a bad thing. Americans benefit through lower prices and increased economic activity from a more efficient global oil market.

Moreover, a barrel of oil extracted in Texas isn't the same as a barrel extracted in Saudi Arabia. Crude can range from very light to very heavy depending on its density, and sweet to sour depending on its sulfur content. Through open markets and a continual flow of imports and exports, matching refining capabilities that are more suited for different types of crude benefits us all.

Although the U.S. will never be completely detached from the global oil markets, America's increased supplies and inventories is providing a welcome cushion to withstand the adverse economic impacts of geopolitical events. Because of the drive of American entrepreneurs, domestic oil production has more than doubled since January 2010 to more than 12.5 million barrels per day.

The United States is now the world's largest oil producer, which is great news if you like affordable energy, more jobs and higher levels of prosperity.

Moreover, getting more domestic oil and refined petroleum products into the market is serving as a price shock absorber.

The situation with Iran is the latest in a number of events over the past two years that could have sent oil prices skyrocket-

By NICOLAS LORIS

The Heritage Foundation

Nicolas Loris is The Heritage Foundation's Morgan Fellow in Energy and Environmental Policy and deputy director of its Roe Institute for Economic Policy Studies.



ing—but didn't. In September, attacks on Saudi Arabian facilities briefly took 5.7 million barrels per day offline. Last spring, a drone strike shut down a Saudi Arabian pipeline, and two oil tankers were attacked. Furthermore, Venezuela's economic collapse and sanctions on Iran have removed significant sources of supply.

And in the U.S., tropical cyclone activity in the Gulf Coast the past two years threatened both extraction and refining. While some supply disruptions caused prices at the pump to increase, including a 20% bump after the Saudi installation attacks, there was no prolonged period of price spikes.

As Ashley Petersen, senior oil market analyst for Stratas Advisors, told news outlet Axios, "The U.S. oil boom is the primary reason nobody is seriously discussing triple-digit oil prices even with everything that is going on and went on this summer."

This certainly wasn't always the case.

As C.K. Hickey wrote in Foreign Policy, "Previous Middle East crises resulted in greater disruptions of the oil market. The August 1990 Iraqi invasion of Kuwait led to a surge in the price of oil from \$15 a barrel that month to \$40 by October (\$65.68 adjusted for inflation as of 2019). In February 2003, the lead-up to the U.S. invasion of Iraq once again led to a spike in prices to nearly \$40 a barrel, or around \$55 in today's dollars, a level that hadn't been seen since the Gulf War."

Yet, America's significant increase in production has fundamentally shifted the global energy landscape. Last fall, for the first time in 75 years, the U.S. was a net exporter of crude oil and refined petroleum products. Through the power of free enterprise, imports of crude oil to the U.S. from Persian Gulf Countries hit record lows. American producers are exporting more crude oil than the entire country of Iran produces.

Nevertheless, so long as consumers are filling up their cars with gas, the U.S. will never be fully energy independent. And the Middle East will likely remain a larger part of the global oil market well into the future. But thanks to America's energy revolution, we're in a much better situation economically and geopolitically than we were when President Nixon made those comments 46 years ago.

EDITORIAL POLICY

Letters to the editor must include the NAME, VILLAGE ADDRESS, and CONTACT NUMBER of the contributor. Letters that do not have these information will immediately be trashed. Contributions consisting of 500 words or less have more chances of getting published. The *Saipan Tribune* reserves the right to publish a contribution or not; the right to edit submissions for length, accuracy, and clarity; and the right to publish and distribute contributions in print, electronic, or other media formats. Submissions may be sent via snail mail to the 2nd Floor, JP Center, Beach Road, Garapan, Saipan, 96950; fax (670) 235-3740; e-mail to editor@saipantribune.com; or through our website at www.saipantribune.com.

Making the switch on Medicare plans

Did you sign up for a Medicare Advantage health plan last year only to find that it doesn't meet your needs? Not to worry.

You still have time to switch to another Medicare Advantage plan, or return to Original Medicare.

Between Jan. 1 and March 31 each year, you can make the following changes during the Medicare Advantage Open Enrollment Period:

- If you're in a Medicare Advantage plan (with or without drug coverage), you can switch to another Medicare Advantage plan (with or without drug coverage).

- You can drop your Medicare Advantage plan and return to Original Medicare. You'll also be able to join a Medicare prescription drug plan (also known as a Part D plan).

During this period, you can't:

- Switch from Original Medicare to a Medicare Advantage plan.

- Join a Medicare prescription drug plan if you're in Original Medicare.

- Switch from one Medicare prescription drug plan to another if you're in Original Medicare.

You can only make one change during this period, and any changes you make will be effective the first of the month after the plan gets your request.

If you're returning to Original Medicare and joining a drug plan, you don't need to contact your Medicare Advantage plan

to disenroll. The disenrollment will happen automatically when you join the drug plan.

In most cases, you must stay enrolled for the calendar year, starting on the date your coverage begins.

However, you can make changes to your Medicare Advantage and Medicare prescription drug coverage when certain events happen in your life, like if you move or you lose other insurance coverage. These opportunities to make changes are called Special Enrollment Periods (SEPs).

Rules about when you can make changes and the type of changes you can make are different for each SEP. You can learn more about SEPs here: <https://www.medicare.gov/sign-up-change-plans/when-can-i-join-a-health-or-drug-plan/special-circumstances-special-enrollment-periods>.

How do you switch? Follow these steps if you're already in a Medicare Advantage plan and want to switch:

- To switch to a new Medicare Advantage plan, simply join the plan you want. You'll be disenrolled automatically from your old plan when your new plan's coverage begins.

- To switch to Original Medicare, contact your current plan, or call 1-800-MEDICARE (1-800-633-4227). TTY users can call 1-877-486-2048.

If you don't have drug coverage, you should consider joining a Medicare prescription drug plan to avoid paying a penalty if you decide to join later. You may also want to consider buying a Medicare Supplement Insurance (Medigap) policy if you're

By CATE KORTZEBORN

Special to the Saipan Tribune



Cate Kortzeborn is Medicare's regional administrator for Arizona, California, Nevada, Hawaii, and the Pacific Territories. You can always get answers to your Medicare questions by calling 1-800-MEDICARE (1-800-633-4227).

eligible.

You can find out more about Medigap here: <https://www.medicare.gov/supplements-other-insurance/when-can-i-buy-medigap/4-steps-to-buy-a-medigap-policy>.

For more details about Medicare Advantage plans, visit www.medicare.gov/publications to view the booklet "Understanding Medicare Advantage Plans."

If you believe you made the wrong plan choice because of inaccurate or misleading information, including information from Medicare's online Plan Finder, call 1-800-MEDICARE and explain your situation. Call center representatives can help you throughout the year with options for making changes.

A final note: If you enrolled in a Medicare Advantage plan during your Initial Enrollment Period (when you first became eligible for Medicare), you can change to another Medicare Advantage plan (with or without drug coverage) or go back to Original Medicare (with or without a drug plan) within the first three months you have Medicare.

Never mind Iran and impeachment: Pay attention to Taiwan

Adramatic election that produced a stunning victory for democracy got too little attention here last weekend, as Americans focused on Iran and impeachment.

In a blow to Beijing, Taiwan's voters decisively re-elected Tsai Ing-wen, a tough female president who rejects China's demand that her island democracy unify with the mainland.

Angry Chinese officials insisted the unification of the island with the communist mainland was "inevitable." This, despite the failure of military intimidation, economic incentives and rampant election meddling to convince the Taiwanese public.

U.S. policy since 1979 has been to dissuade Beijing from forcefully seizing the island, and to provide Taiwan with defensive weapons to make that less likely. But Taiwan's fate is the issue with the most potential to spark a military confrontation between Washington and Beijing.

So it's time for Americans to pay more attention to Taiwan's ongoing struggle to preserve its democracy against an authoritarian Beijing regime.

On a trip to Taiwan and Hong Kong in November, I was impressed at the impact Hong Kong's pro-democracy struggle had made on Taiwan, despite differences in population and history.

Taiwan was never part of the People's Republic of China, although the PRC has always claimed it. Known as The Republic of China, Taiwan's government was formed when Chinese nationalist leader Chiang Kai-shek and his army fled to Taipei in 1949 after his mainland government was defeated by the Communists.

Initially a military autocracy, that government evolved into a raucous democracy. The capital, Taipei, is far less ostentatiously wealthy than Beijing or Shanghai, but rich in good eateries, universities and a great national museum. Skilled at small business and advanced technology, its 23 million people have lived in a gray zone, considering themselves separate from China, but never declaring full independence lest Beijing attack.

Tsai Ing-wen has walked a careful line, insisting the self-governing island was sovereign, but not declaring independence. "We don't have a need to declare ourselves an independent state," she told the BBC after her reelection. "We are an independent country already and we call ourselves the Republic of China (Taiwan)."

The far more glitzy and multinational Hong Kong was returned to China by Britain in 1997 under a formula known as "one country, two systems" by which Beijing was supposed to permit Hong Kong to retain rule of law, an independent judiciary and increasingly free elections for 50 years. But China has consistently reduced Hong Kong's freedoms, leading to the ongoing protests.

Tsai's campaign was faltering before the Hong Kong demonstrations—with pro-Beijing politicians gaining. But her polls soared as China cracked down on young Hong Kongers. "China was trying to use Hong Kong as a model, but we see it is a fake," I was told by Wang Ting-yu, chairman of the Foreign and Defense Committee of the Taiwanese parliament. "Taiwanese don't believe in 'one country, two systems.' Democracy cannot exist under the Chinese system."

Adds Ketty Chen, vice president of the Taiwan Foundation for Democracy: "Taiwanese are not necessarily pro-independence. But they do not want to be part of the People's Republic of China, especially looking at what is going on in Hong Kong. The PRC is not capturing the hearts and minds of the people here, not from what it is doing in Taiwan and Hong Kong."

Of course, Beijing has shown no interest in winning hearts



Taiwan's 2020 presidential election candidate, Taiwanese President Tsai Ing-wen celebrates her victory with supporters in Taipei, Taiwan, Saturday, Jan. 11, 2020.

By TRUDY RUBIN

The Philadelphia Inquirer



Trudy Rubin is a columnist and editorial-board member for the Philadelphia Inquirer. Readers may write to her at: Philadelphia Inquirer, P.O. Box 8263, Philadelphia, Pa. 19101, or by email at trubin@phillynews.com.

and minds. Had it done so, the situation in Hong Kong could have been calmed months ago, with the appointment of a truly independent commission to look into police violence against protesters.

Now the question is whether Xi Jinping will pay any attention to hearts and minds in Taiwan—and the young people there who increasingly identify there as Taiwanese rather than Chinese.

So far no sign he will do so, preferring to flaunt military might designed to intimidate Taiwan. Beijing will also pressure or bribe the remaining 15 nations that still recognize Taiwanese sovereignty to withdraw their embassies. And it is unlikely Xi

will renew a cross-straits dialogue with Tsai's government that Beijing broke because she would not recognize "one China."

Xi has pledged to "reunify" the island with the mainland by 2049, the centennial of the PRC's establishment, but some analysts believe he might use force to do so, sooner, while he is president. Others believe China has so many more pressing problems he will refrain.

The Trump administration has sold Taipei billions worth of defensive weapons, and effusively congratulated Tsai on her reelection. Secretary of State Mike Pompeo commended her for maintaining stability with Beijing "in the face of unrelenting pressure."

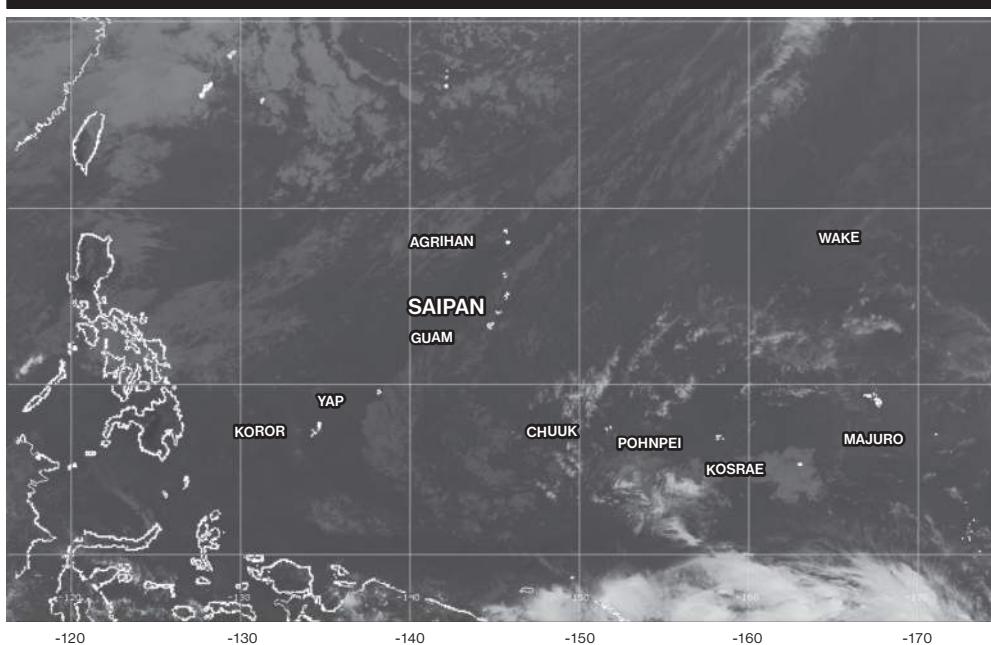
But the United States has no formal defense pact with Taiwan, and no one is certain what President Trump would do if China attacked the island. The United States, along with other democracies, must make clear to Beijing that any such attack would make it a pariah. They must also encourage Tsai Ing-wen to stay in the gray zone: a sovereign democracy short of independence that gives Beijing no pretext to attack.

The Weather

5-DAY FORECAST FOR SAIPAN AND TINIAN

TODAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY
Partly sunny with isolated showers. Northeast winds 15 to 20 mph.	Mostly cloudy and breezy with isolated showers. Northeast winds 15 to 20 mph.	Mostly cloudy with isolated showers.	Partly cloudy with isolated showers.	Partly cloudy with isolated showers.
87°	74°	86°	76°	88°
76°	87°	75°	87°	75°

YESTERDAY'S SATELLITE IMAGE



PICTURE TIME: 7:23 AM, SUNDAY, JANUARY 19, 2020

Western North Pacific between equator and 25N from 130E to 180.

Guam weather radar shows scattered showers moving through the Marianas waters, with showers beginning to diminish toward the east. The VAD wind profile indicates northeast winds of 12 to 16 knots through the lowest 9 thousand feet of the air. The buoys reveal combined seas of 4 to 6 feet composed mainly of northeast trade-wind swell with minor contributions from a north swell and northeast wind waves.

Satellite image and accompanying information are provided by the National Weather Service. For an updated weather forecast, visit the National Weather Service Guam homepage: www.prh.noaa.gov/guam/

MICRONESIA		▲	▼	°F
Guam and Rota	Thunderstorms	84°	/	75°
Palau	Mostly Sunny	85°	/	78°
Yap	Mostly Sunny	85°	/	79°
Chuuk	Mostly Sunny	84°	/	79°
Pohnpei	Partly Cloudy	85°	/	79°
Kosrae	Partly Cloudy	85°	/	79°
Majuro	Partly Cloudy	86°	/	80°

AROUND THE GLOBE		▲	▼	°F
Auckland	Sunny	75°	/	61°
Beijing	Sunny	41°	/	18°
Hong Kong	Mostly Cloudy	72°	/	66°
Honolulu	Mostly Sunny	79°	/	70°
London	Mostly Sunny	43°	/	32°
Los Angeles	Cloudy	73°	/	54°
Manila	Mostly Sunny	86°	/	73°
Melbourne	Showers	73°	/	57°
Miami	Thunderstorms	76°	/	56°
New York	Mostly Sunny	33°	/	23°
Osaka	Partly Cloudy	52°	/	37°
Paris	Mostly Sunny	45°	/	30°
Busan	Partly Cloudy	48°	/	36°
Rome	Mostly Cloudy	57°	/	36°
Salem	Mostly Sunny	48°	/	25°
San Francisco	Showers	57°	/	48°
Seoul	Partly Cloudy	39°	/	25°
Tokyo	Mostly Sunny	55°	/	37°
Washington, DC	Mostly Sunny	35°	/	23°

NMI CRIME STOPPERS	
Anonymous tips can now be submitted through the following:	
■ Call 234-7272 (PARA) on any telephone	
■ *11 on any IT&E cellular phone	
■ Log on to the internet at www.nmicrimestoppers.net	

TIDES: SAIPAN HARBOR TODAY FEET		
5:07 AM	HIGH TIDE	1.34
9:51 AM	LOW TIDE	0.93
3:30 PM	HIGH TIDE	1.75
11:08 PM	LOW TIDE	-0.28

DAY	SUNRISE	SUNSET
Today	6:47 AM	6:08 PM
Tuesday	6:47 AM	6:09 PM
Wednesday	6:47 AM	6:09 PM
Thursday	6:47 AM	6:10 PM
Friday	6:47 AM	6:10 PM

DAY	MOONRISE	MOONSET	MOONRISE
Today	2:21 AM	2:06 PM	-
Tuesday	3:18 AM	2:56 PM	-
Wednesday	4:15 AM	3:48 PM	-
Thursday	5:11 AM	4:41 PM	-
Friday	6:04 AM	5:35 PM	-

NEWS DESK For news tips, corrections and requests for news coverage, call (670) 235-NEWS (6397), 235-2440, fax 235-3740. E-mail: editor@saipantribune.com. Website: www.saipantribune.com.

CUSTOMER SERVICE For inquiries, purchase of back issues and complaints, call (670) 235-8747, 235-2440, fax 235-3740.

SUBSCRIPTION Published Monday to Friday, *Saipan Tribune* offers door-to-door on-island delivery at an annual rate of \$180. For additional subscription information, call (670) 235-8747 or 235-2769, or fax 235-3740.

ADVERTISING For inquiries contact (670) 235-2769. E-mail: sales@saipantribune.com

FLIGHT SCHEDULE AS OF JANUARY 18, 2020

DEPARTURES				ARRIVALS			
SAIPAN-GUAM (GUM)				GUAM (GUM)-SAIPAN			
UA117 9:15am 9:55am Daily				UA174 7:30am 8:11am Daily			
UA156 6:20pm 7:00pm 2, 4, 6				UA112 4:45pm 5:26pm 2, 4, 6			
SAIPAN-NARITA (NRT)				NARITA (NRT)-SAIPAN			
SKY816 4:35pm 7:30pm 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 7				SKY811 10:15am 3:00pm Daily			
SKY816 5:05pm 8:00pm 6							
SAIPAN-BUSAN (PUS)				BUSAN (PUS)-SAIPAN			
7C3451 3:20am 6:30am Daily				7C3452 9:35pm 2:30am+1 1, 2, 4, 5, 6, 7			
7C3452 10:05pm 2:30am+1 3							
SAIPAN-SEOUL (ICN)				SEOUL (ICN)-SAIPAN			
TW308 2:05am 6:05am Daily				OZ623 6:45am 12:10pm 5			
OZ626 2:10am 6:05am 1				OZ623 7:00am 12:20pm 7			
OZ626 2:50am 6:40am 2, 3, 5, 6, 7				OZ6233 7:30am 12:50pm 2, 4, 6			
OZ626 3:35am 7:20am 4				OZ623 8:10am 1:40pm 1, 3			
7C3403 4:35am 8:35am Daily				7C3402 10:10am 3:30pm Daily			
OZ6243 3:20pm 7:10pm 2, 4, 6				TW309 11:10am 4:25pm Daily			
OZ6243 3:50pm 7:40pm 1, 3, 5, 7				OZ625 7:30pm 1:00am+1 7			
7C3401 4:30pm 8:25pm Daily				TW307 7:45pm 1:05am+1 Daily			
TW310 5:25pm 10:15pm Daily				OZ625 8:			

Business

IslandRide service starts this week

By BEA CABRERA
beacabrera@saipan@gmail.com
CORRESPONDENT

The idea of ride-sharing comes to Saipan with the launch last Friday of the IslandRide application at the Royal Taga Ballroom of the Saipan World Resort in Susupe, with over a hundred potential drivers and users attending the launch event.

Owned by Digital Saipan, the IslandRide app is being dubbed as Saipan's version of Uber and Grab and offers to transport people, goods, and services through ridesharing.

The launch was hosted

by Digital Saipan marketing manager Robert Exley, who said there is a dire need for public and mass transportation on island that they want to help fill, which is why they came up with IslandRide. "People can start using the IslandRide app starting this week as we already have a pool of drivers that have been vetted and completed all the requirements. As for the mode of payment, cash payment shall be accepted for the first three months. ...[That] will give us time to work with the local vendors—whether they would be groceries, restaurants or hotels—to carry IslandRide prepaid cards that riders can use," he said.

"...the island is so di-



Digital Saipan marketing manager Robert Exley presents the IslandRide app during its launch last Friday at the Royal Taga Ballroom of the Saipan World Resort in Susupe.

BEA CABRERA

verse—we have locals and immigrants—and the latter most of the time do not have access or don't want a bank card..." Exley said. "So at the end of the day, riders can use bank cards or prepaid cards."

He said the company is also working

on making people use WeChat or PayPal as a mode of payment "so there are a variety of ways riders can pay and drivers can get the value of their service," he added.

According to Exley, the IslandRide app is available on all iPhone and Android users.

"...for iPhone users, the Apple Store has already cleared all security for the IslandRide app. ...We are still waiting for Google Play for Android users but they are telling us it's going to be available any day." Until then, Android user can download the app from the Digital Saipan website, www.islandride.tk.

"We got people who are excited about this service. People that had good questions and comments that made it clear that our greatest asset has been

the people who want to institute the technology, whether they would be passengers or riders," he said

The basic functions of the IslandRide app starts with passengers typing their pick-up and drop-off locations. The estimated fare and time of arrival will appear, the nearest driver will appear with his information, and will respond and take the passenger to the preferred destination.

The IslandRide app also comes in different languages. User can use English, Tagalog, Korean, Japanese and Chinese languages and the IslandRide app allows users to book in advance.

During the whole process, both driver and passenger are tracked by Digital Saipan through geolocation. "Safety is our No. 1 concern. That is why our drivers are vetted, passengers can pick their driver based on the rat-

ings that that driver get from other passengers. ...Aside from transporting people, we are also in the business of transporting goods—groceries, take-out food and many more," Exley said.

Sen. Sixto Igisomar, who was present at the app launch, is optimistic about this service coming to the CNMI. "...We currently have taxicab service but, un-

fortunately, they are just too expensive as a choice for us to go around. As much as our Department of Commerce

Taxi Bureau tries to pass and regulate licensing, there are still a lot of illegal taxicabs, which means their activities are not screened and safety of the community becomes an issue," he said.

"We have buses from the Commonwealth Office of Transport Authority but, [because of] funding challenges, we have a hard time realizing

the vision to have a transport system in the entire island. ... The fact that these guys went this far to make our community live better, we are praying...that they can succeed and mobilize our people to go from one end to another," he added.

Potential driver Cesar Antonio of San Antonio said he looks forward to being a part of the fleet and is looking at doing the service full time. "I am currently unemployed and this gives people like me an opportunity to have a good job and earn money."

Exley also unveiled plans of opening the website "IslandRideStore.com" in the near future. That is envisioned as a digital marketplace, where the community can buy and sell goods, furniture, appliances etc.

"The IslandRide Store is a medium where the community can sell goods to one another, making trade and exchange convenient for the community and have IslandRide drivers deliver the goods right at your doorstep," he said.

St. Louis donations wipe away \$13 million in medical debt

ST. LOUIS (AP)—Thousands of St. Louis-area families were freed from a major financial burden thanks to a charitable effort that is increasingly popular among churches and other organizations trying to help the needy—eliminating medical debt.

Money raised at more than a dozen United Church of Christ congregations and a donation from the St. Louis-based Deaconess Foundation wiped away nearly \$13 million in

medical debt for 11,108 families in St. Louis city and county. United Church of Christ officials and civic leaders announced details Saturday. The church was also sending letters this weekend to those whose debt was wiped out.

Rebecca Turner, a pastor in Maplewood, Missouri, said that for many families, medical debt is "often so enormous that there is no way to repay it. Very often they lose their homes, their vehicles, their

wages are garnished, and once that happens, it's nearly impossible to get out of poverty.

"It's our prayer that for many of the families who receive this forgiveness of debt, it will be a fresh start," Turner said. "We pray it gives them hope."

It is believed that more than 43 million Americans owe \$75 billion in past-due medical debt. Hospitals and other health care organizations often write off bills deemed uncollectible, but they also sell the

debt to collection agencies at a huge discount, often about 1 cent on the dollar. The collection agencies then make money by seeking payment from debtors who are often poor and lack adequate health insurance.

The St. Louis-area congregations worked with RIP Medical Debt, a New York state-based nonprofit that buys medical debt and works with churches and charitable groups to pay it off.

US agency examining Tesla unintended acceleration complaint

DETROIT (AP)—The U.S. government's auto safety agency is looking into allegations that all three of Tesla's electric vehicle models can suddenly accelerate on their own. Brian Sparks of Berkeley, California, petitioned the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration asking for an investigation.

Nation

Boy arrested after shooting that killed 4 in small Utah town

A boy armed with a gun killed three children and a woman inside a Utah home, then accompanied a fifth victim to a hospital, where he was arrested, police said Saturday.

Police were still trying to piece together who's who and what happened leading up to Friday night's shooting in Grantsville. Investigators believe the victims are all related to one another, and officials declined to release information about the shooter other than he is a juvenile male.

"We're trying to make certain that we verify people's relationships among the deceased and the survivor," Grantsville Police Cpl. Rhonda Fields told The Associated Press Saturday. "As for motive, we don't have any of that."

It appears to be the largest mass shooting in Utah since 2007, when a shotgun-wielding gunman killed five people and himself at Trolley Square mall in Salt Lake City. It's also the first homicide in nearly 20 years in Grantsville, a town of 11,000 about 35 miles (56 kilometers) west of Salt Lake City.

"It's been a very long time," Fields said.

The boy faces 10 charges, the most serious being aggravated homicide, she said. Police were not able to release his identity because he has been charged as a juvenile.

Officials said he is the only suspect. His relationship to the victims was not

immediately clear.

The names of the victims have not been released, and their identities may not be publicly known until Monday, Fields said.

Authorities have not been called to the house in the past.

Police responded to a call of shots fired inside at home at approximately 7 p.m. Friday. When officers arrived, they found the bodies of two girls, a boy and a woman, Fields said.

The shooter and the surviving victim were gone, she said. Authorities later discovered that a person who arrived at the house after the shooting drove the suspect and the surviving victim to a nearby hospital, Fields said.

Officers arrested the boy at the hospital. He was being held at a youth detention facility.

The fifth victim had sustained a gunshot wound, was in stable condition and expected to survive, Fields said.

The person who drove them to the hospital was not involved in shooting, she said.

Grantsville Mayor Brent Marshall said the shooting happened in a very quiet neighborhood, the Deseret News reported.

"It's an unfortunate tragedy that has taken place here this evening," Marshall said. "Any time you have children involved in something, it becomes very emotional, very fast."

Tooele County School District officials said on Twitter

National Archives: 'We made a mistake' altering Trump photos

WEST PALM BEACH, Fla. (AP)—The National Archives said Saturday it made a mistake when it blurred images of anti-Trump signs used in an exhibit on women's suffrage.

The independent agency is charged with preserving government and historical records and said it has always been committed to preserving its holdings "without alteration."

But the archives said in a statement Saturday "we made a mistake." The archives' statement came one day after The Washington Post published an online report about the altered images.

The archives said the photo in question is not one of its archival records, but rather was licensed for use as a promotional graphic in the exhibit.

"Nonetheless, we were wrong to alter the image," the agency said.

The current display has been removed and will be replaced as soon as possible with one

they plan to offer counseling to students when they return to school on Tuesday.

Utah Gov. Gary Herbert released a statement through Twitter.

"Parents and grandparents, secure your firearms! Everyone, hug your loved ones tight.

And remember love, not hate, will heal broken individuals and families," he wrote. (AP)

Trump team, House managers trade sharp views on impeachment



President Donald Trump escorted by Col. Brian Daniels walks to board Air Force One at Andrews Air Force Base, Md., Friday, Jan. 17, 2020, en route to his Mar-a-Lago estate, in Palm Beach, Fla. (AP)

WASHINGTON (AP)—

President Donald Trump's legal team issued a fiery response Saturday ahead of opening arguments in his impeachment trial, while House Democrats laid out their case in forceful fashion, saying the president betrayed public trust with behavior that was the "worst nightmare" of the

founding fathers.

The dueling filings previewed arguments both sides intend to make once Trump's impeachment trial begins in earnest Tuesday in the Senate. Their challenge will be to make a case that appeals to the 100 senators who will render the verdict and for an American public bracing for a presidential election in 10 months.

"President Donald J. Trump used his official powers to pressure a foreign government to interfere in a United States election for his personal political gain," the House prosecutors wrote, "and then attempted to cover up his scheme by obstructing Congress's investigation into his misconduct."

Trump's legal team, responding to the Senate's official summons for the trial, said

the president "categorically and unequivocally" denies the charges of abuse and obstruction against him.

"This is a brazen and unlawful attempt to overturn the results of the 2016 election and interfere with the 2020 election, now just months away," the president's filing states.

Stripped of legalese and structured in plain English, the documents underscored the extent to which the impeachment proceedings are a political rather than conventional legal process.

They are the first of several filings expected in coming days as senators prepare to take their seats for the rare impeachment court.

Senators swore an oath to do "impartial justice" as the chamber convenes to consider the

two articles of impeachment approved by the House last month as Trump's presidency and legacy hangs in balance.

One Republican whose votes are closely watched, Sen. Lisa Murkowski of Alaska, acknowledged Saturday the political pressure bearing on them.

"I'm going to take my constitutional obligations very, very seriously," she told reporters from Anchorage on a call.

The House's 111-page brief outlined the prosecutors' narrative, starting from Trump's phone call with Ukraine and relying on the private and public testimony of a dozen witnesses—ambassadors and national security officials at high levels of government—who raised concerns about the president's actions.

Man arrested in shooting of 13 people at Chicago house party

CHICAGO (AP)—A man has been charged with attempted murder in a December shooting at a Chicago house party that left 13 people wounded, Chicago police said Saturday.

According to a police statement, 25-year-old Keilon Jones was arrested Thursday. He is also charged with aggravated battery.

It's not clear if Jones has an attorney who could comment on the allegations. Jones was due in court Saturday. Police didn't release any information

about how investigators identified Jones.

Police have said the Dec. 22 shooting stemmed from a dispute at a memorial party being held in honor of someone killed in April. Authorities have said the shooting began inside a house in the city's Englewood neighborhood and more shots were fired as people began fleeing.

Police have said the victims ranged in age from 16 to 48. None of their wounds were fatal.

Another man was arrested

nearby shortly after the shooting and charged with possession of a firearm by a felon and as an armed habitual criminal. Prosecutors have said police stopped Marciano White, 37, as he carried a bag near the house and found a .357-caliber pistol inside.

During a December bail hearing, public defender Scott Finger said there was no evidence that White shot anyone.

Prosecutors said they were awaiting the results of forensic tests on the gun police found in White's bag.

Asia

Philippine volcano simmers, officials brace for long crisis

AGONCILLO, Philippines (AP)—Philippine officials said Saturday they're bracing for a long crisis whether the Taal volcano erupts more disastrously or simmers precariously for weeks or months, as massive numbers of displaced villagers languish in emergency shelters.

Health Secretary Francisco Duque III said more than 900 villagers who fell ill have been treated, mostly for exposure to volcanic ash, in evacuation

sites since the volcano began erupting in Batangas province near Manila, the capital, last weekend.

About 125,000 people fled from ash-blanketed villages and crammed into hundreds of emergency centers in Batangas alone and many others took shelter in relatives' homes, disaster-response officials said, appealing for masks, bottled water, portable toilets, food and sleeping mats.

"It's really massive because

ASIAN BRIEFS

4 SKoreans, 3 Nepal guides missing in avalanche; 30 rescued

KATHMANDU, Nepal (AP)—An avalanche swept a popular trekking route in Nepal's mountains, leaving at least four South Koreans and three Nepali guides missing, authorities said Saturday. Nepal's Department of Tourism official Meera Acharya said at least one Chinese national injured in the avalanche was rescued by helicopter. The avalanche hit along the popular Annapurna circuit trekking route, which encircles Mount Annapurna. Acharya said efforts were being made to rescue the others. So far, rescuers have been able to pluck 30 trekkers who were trapped by the avalanche blocking the trail and flew them to a safe area. Weather conditions were poor with temperature dropping in the last two days, making the operation more difficult.

South Korea to decide fate of 1st transgender soldier

SEOUL, South Korea (AP)—In the first such case in South Korea, military officials will determine next week whether to discharge a soldier who recently undertook gender reassignment surgery, officials said Friday. South Korea bans transgender people from joining its military but has no specific regulations on what to do with those who have sex change operations during their time in the service. The non-commissioned officer entered the military as a man and had a sex change operation last year and is currently at a military-run hospital, army spokesman Jeon Ha Gyu said. It's the first time an active-duty soldier in South Korea has been referred to a military panel to decide whether to end his or her service due to gender reassignment operations, according to Jeon and Defense Ministry spokeswoman Choi Hyunsoo.

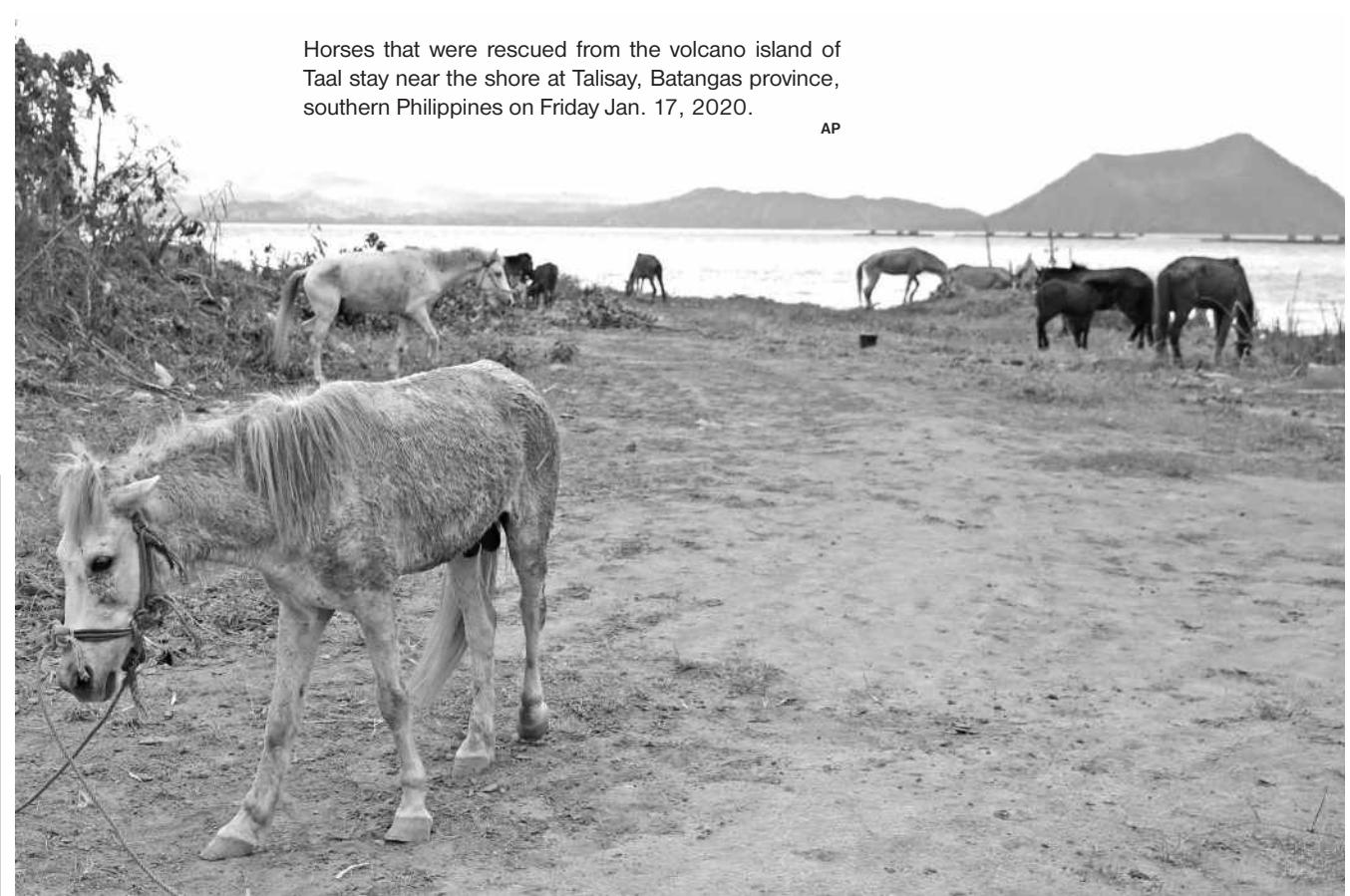
Sweden summons

Chinese envoy over 'lightweight boxer' remark

HELSINKI (AP)—Sweden's government summoned the Chinese ambassador in Stockholm to discuss his comments Saturday that compared Swedish media coverage of China to a lightweight boxer who "provokes a feud" with a heavyweight. Chinese Ambassador Gui Congyou used the boxing metaphor while speaking with Swedish public broadcaster SVT. Swedish Foreign Minister Ann Linde on Saturday called the envoy's statement an "unacceptable threat." Linde said she has summoned him to discuss the issue on Tuesday. "Freedom of speech prevails" in Sweden, and "what China's ambassador now does is very serious," she said. In his remarks to SVT, Gui said he believes Swedish journalists have interfered in China's internal affairs with their reporting. He didn't give specific examples, but characterized the relationship between his country and Swedish media as reminiscent of two boxers. He didn't specify the allegations.

China's Xi ends Myanmar visit with flurry of agreements

NAYPYITAW, Myanmar (AP)—Chinese President Xi Jinping ended a two-day state visit to Myanmar on Saturday after attending the signing of a raft of agreements buttressing bilateral relations and advancing Beijing's ambitious Belt and Road Initiative, in which his host country is a key player. The two sides exchanged memoranda of understanding, letters and protocols covering 33 projects in the fields of information, industry, agriculture, security and the resettlement of internally displaced people in Myanmar's war-torn Kachin State, which borders China. The agreements were signed after a morning meeting between Xi and Myanmar's leader, State Counselor Aung San Suu Kyi.



Horses that were rescued from the volcano island of Taal stay near the shore at Talisay, Batangas province, southern Philippines on Friday Jan. 17, 2020.

AP

you're talking of more or less 100,000 evacuees in evacuation centers, so the infrastructure and services needed are really huge," Duque said. "This is not going to be for the short term, but for the medium if not long term."

After belching a massive plume of ash and steam more than 15 kilometers (9 miles) into the sky when it rumbled back to life last Sunday, Taal has been spewing smaller emissions and shuddering with fewer earthquakes in recent days. But despite a perceived waning of its restiveness, continuing volcanic quakes, the drying of Taal's crater lake and other signs indicate magma is moving beneath, said Renato Solidum, who heads the Philippine Institute of Volcanol-

ogy and Seismology.

"We have this perception now that it's waning versus underground sub-surface activity, which indicates otherwise," Solidum said at a news conference, adding that experts "have not seen a definite trend that it's weakening."

The 311-meter (1,020-foot)-high Taal is one of the world's smallest but the second-most restive of about two dozen active Philippine volcanoes. It has remained at alert level 4, the second-highest warning, indicating a hazardous explosive eruption is possible within hours or days.

Duque said hundreds of villagers have been treated for respiratory infections, hypertension, diarrhea, skin lesions, flu and coughs in evacuation

centers. About 300,000 masks, including those from regions unaffected by the volcanic eruption, have been sent to calamity-hit areas.

The government's main disaster-response agency will hold a meeting next week to discuss concerns, including hygiene in evacuation camps, Duque said. He has sought the help of the military to build latrines and repair toilets in emergency shelters, mostly school buildings.

In the hard-hit town of Agoncillo, Mayor Daniel Reyes said all 42,000 residents abandoned their homes, including 8,000 who are now encamped in evacuation centers and need food, water and aid. "They rushed out of their homes without bringing anything, so

they will really be dependent on our help," Reyes said.

Agoncillo still has about two weeks worth of food, water and aid packs and will need help from the provincial and national governments when supplies get depleted, he said.

While tending to the thousands of displaced residents, Reyes said he and other officials were preparing contingency plans in case Taal erupts violently.

"There is a great possibility that it will erupt," Reyes said, citing a briefing by government volcano experts.

The Philippines lies along the Pacific "Ring of Fire," a string of faults around the ocean basin where many of the world's earthquakes and volcanic eruptions occur.

China reports 17 new cases in viral pneumonia outbreak

BEIJING (AP)—Seventeen more people in central China have been diagnosed with a new form of viral pneumonia that has killed two patients and placed other countries on alert as millions of Chinese travel for Lunar New Year holidays.

In total, 62 cases of the novel coronavirus have been identified in the city of Wuhan, where the virus appears to have originated. The Wuhan Municipal Health Commission reported the new cases in a statement Sunday.

Nineteen of those individuals have been discharged from the hospital, while two men in their 60s—one with severe preexisting conditions—have died from the illness. Eight are in critical condition.



A traveler wears a facemask as he walks in front of the Beijing Railway Station in Beijing, Friday, Jan. 17, 2020.

initial symptoms were fever and cough.

The health commission's statement did not say whether these patients had visited the Huanan Seafood Wholesale Market, which has been suspended after many infected individuals reported having either worked at or visited the venue.

Health authorities have maintained that there is no evidence that the virus transmits easily between humans.

The Chinese government is keen to avoid a repeat of SARS, or severe acute respiratory syndrome, another coronavirus that started in southern China in late 2002 and spread to more than two dozen countries, killing nearly 800 people.

At least a half-dozen countries in Asia and three U.S. airports have started screening incoming airline passengers from central China. The list includes Thailand and Japan, which have together

reported three cases of the disease in people who had come from Wuhan.

In the most recently diagnosed group, ages ranged between 30 and 79, Wuhan's health commission said. Their

World

Putin says he opposes unlimited presidential term

MOSCOW (AP)—Russian President Vladimir Putin said Saturday that he opposes the idea of an unlimited term in office for the country's leader like the system that existed in the Soviet Union.

Putin's comment at a meeting with World War II veterans in St. Petersburg came days after he called for constitutional changes that could help him remain in power once his presidential term ends in 2024.

When a veteran at Saturday's meeting proposed not having term limits for Russia's president, Putin responded that "it would be very disturbing to return to the situation of the mid-1980s, with the leaders of the state, one by one, staying in power until the end of their days."

There has been uncertainty about Russia's future political course since Putin suggested in his Wednesday state-of-the-nation address amending the constitution to allow lawmakers to name prime ministers and Cabinet members. The president currently holds the authority to make those appointments.

Observers speculated that after increasing the powers of parliament and the Cabinet and curtailing presidential authority, Putin might repeat a strategy he used before to stay in charge—shifting into the prime minister's seat.

Putin first became president in 2000, and moved to the prime minister's office in 2008 when constitutional limits prevented him from seeking a third term. His chosen successor as president, Dmitry Medvedev, was



NATIONAL TULIP DAY

Tulips, waiting to be picked for free, are put on display on Dam Square in front of the Royal Palace in Amsterdam, Netherlands, Saturday, Jan. 18, 2020, on national tulip day which marks the opening of the 2020 tulip season.

AP

widely seen as less influential than Putin.

Medvedev, who became prime minister after Putin returned to the presidency, submitted his resignation Wednesday after Putin outlined his constitutional proposals. Putin named the head of the national tax service, a technocrat unlikely to chart an independent course, as the new premier.

Rare coin of Britain's King Edward VIII fetches record \$1.3M

LONDON (AP)—One of the world's rarest coins, a gold piece bearing the image of Britain's King Edward VIII before his abdication, has sold for 1 million pounds (\$1.3 million), setting a new record for a British coin.

The historical oddity shows Edward, the uncle of Queen Elizabeth II, before he relin-



In this undated photo made available by The Royal Mint, a view of a rare Edward VIII Sovereign coin.

quished the throne in 1936 to marry American divorcee Wallis Simpson.

The buyer was a private collector who wanted his identity kept secret. He told the BBC it was a "once-in-a-lifetime" opportunity.

Rebecca Morgan, head of collector services at the Royal

Mint, said the record price was not surprising.

"The Edward VIII sovereign is one of the rarest and most collectible coins in the world," Morgan said Friday.

The 22-carat gold coins were never released to the public. The Royal Mint says only a handful are known to exist.

Discovery of unused disaster supplies angers Puerto Rico

SAN JUAN, Puerto Rico (AP)—People in a southern Puerto Rico city discovered a warehouse filled with water, cots and other unused emergency supplies, then set off a social media uproar Saturday when they broke in to retrieve goods as the area struggles to recover from a strong earthquake.

With anger spreading in the U.S. territory after video of the event in Ponce appeared on Facebook, Gov. Wanda Vázquez quickly fired the director of the island's emergency management agency.

The governor said she had ordered an investigation after learning the emergency supplies had been piled in the warehouse since Hurricane Maria battered Puerto Rico in September 2017.

Vázquez said inaction by the fired official, Carlos Acevedo, was unacceptable.

"There are thousands of people who have made sacrifices to help those in the south, and it is unforgivable that resources were kept in the warehouse," the governor said.

Puerto Rico's secretary of state, Elmer Román, told reporters that Acevedo had not told him about the contents of the warehouse.

News of the warehouse

known about the warehouse and its contents.

"This is outrageous," she said. "Everyone knows what us mayors went through after Hurricane Maria to try and get help to our cities and how we've worked these weeks to provide basic supplies to people affected by earthquakes. Those involved owe us an explanation."

Inés Rivera, spokeswoman for the city of Ponce, told The Associated Press that the warehouse is owned by Puerto Rico's Company of Commerce and Export. Officials with the company could not be reached for comment.

The information upset many in Puerto Rico already angry over the government's botched response to Hurricane Maria, with similar incidents of supplies going unused being uncovered months later.

Delgado later told reporters that he had received a tip about the warehouse, but gave no specifics on when.

The mayor of Ponce, María

Cult 'anointed by God' kills 7 in Panama Jungle

EL TERRÓN, Panama (AP)—Bibles rest on a wooden altar next to percussion instruments—a guiro and a drum—in the room where a religious sect allegedly forced a pregnant woman and five of her children to walk through fire in this remote hamlet.

The makeshift sanctuary littered with muddy boots and scorched clothing belonged to a cult whose indigenous members professed to be "anointed by God" to sacrifice non-believers, even if the heretics were members of their own families, people in El Terrón say.

Seven villagers were slain by the cult last Monday, while 14 more were rescued the next day by police who found them bound and beaten in the temple, authorities have said. Several more villagers escaped with burns.

Nine villagers have been arrested and charged with murder,

reportedly including a grandfather and two uncles of the five children who died alongside their pregnant mother and a neighbor.

"Nobody expected this," said a distraught tribal leader, Evangelisto Santo.

El Terrón is nestled in the jungle of the indigenous Ngabé Buglé enclave on Panama's Caribbean coast—and it is largely cut off from the modern world. Residents must walk hours along steep and muddy narrow roads to hail boats that can transport them along a river to other villages that have electricity, telephones, health clinics and a police presence.

Many in the community, which gets by growing yucca and rice, are Roman Catholics. The tiny mountain hamlet is home to about 300 people who live in palm-thatched huts. Many are related to one another.

Residents say they had largely ignored the religious group. The sect arose after a villager returned to the community several months ago following a stint abroad, bringing back unusual religious beliefs with him.

"People were dancing and singing and nobody paid attention because we knew that they were in the presence of God," Santo said.

Nobody paid attention, that is, until one of the cult members announced that he had had a vision: Everyone in the hamlet had to repent their sins, or die.

Last weekend, members of "The New Light of God" sect began to drag victims to an improvised church, where they beat them into submission with sticks. Cult members stood ready with machetes to take down those who failed to repent to their satisfaction.

Focus



AP
Dale McLean patrols a controlled fire as they work at building a containment line at a wildfire near Bodalla, Australia, Sunday, Jan. 12, 2020.

By MATTHEW BROWN and
CHRISTINA LARSON
ASSOCIATED PRESS

Australia's forests are burning at a rate unmatched in modern times and scientists say the landscape is being permanently altered as a warming climate brings profound changes to the island continent.

Heat waves and drought have fueled bigger and more frequent fires in parts of Australia, so far this season torching some 40,000 square miles (104,000 square kilometers), an area about as big as Ohio.

With blazes still raging in the country's southeast, government officials are drawing up plans to reseed burned areas to speed up forest recovery that could otherwise take decades or even centuries.

But some scientists and forestry experts doubt that reseeding and other intervention efforts can match the scope of the destruction. The fires since September have killed 28 people and burned more than 2,600 houses.

Before the recent wildfires, ecologists divided up Australia's native vegetation into two categories: fire-adapted landscapes that burn periodically, and those that don't burn. In the recent fires, that distinction lost meaning—even rainforests and peat swamps caught fire, likely changing them forever.

Flames have blazed through jungles dried out by drought, such as Eungella National

Park, where shrouds of mist have been replaced by smoke.

"Anybody would have said these forests don't burn, that there's not enough material and they are wet. Well they did," said forest restoration expert Sebastian Pfautsch, a research fellow at Western Sydney University.

"Climate change is happening now, and we are seeing the effects of it," he said.

High temperatures, drought and more frequent wildfires—all linked to climate change—may make it impossible for even fire-adapted forests to be fully restored, scientists say.

"The normal processes of recovery are going to be less effective, going to take longer," said Roger Kitching, an ecologist at Griffith University in Queensland. "Instead of an ecosystem taking a decade, it may take a century or more to recover, all assuming we don't get another fire season of this magnitude soon."

Young stands of mountain ash trees—which are not expected to burn because they have minimal foliage—have burned in the Australian Alps, the highest mountain range on the continent. Fire this year wiped out stands re-seeded following fires in 2013.

Mountain ash, the world's tallest flowering trees, reach heights of almost 90 meters (300 feet) and live hundreds of years. They're an iconic presence in southeast Australia, comparable to the redwoods of Northern California, and

Australia

are highly valued by the timber industry.

"I'm expecting major areas of (tree) loss this year, mainly because we will not have sufficient seed to sow them," said Owen Bassett of Forest Solutions, a private company that works with government agencies to re-seed forests by helicopter following fires.

Bassett plans to send out teams to climb trees in parts of Victoria that did not burn to harvest seed pods. But he expects to get at most a ton of seeds this year, about one-tenth of what he said is needed.

Fire is a normal part of an ash forest life cycle, clearing out older stands to make way for new growth. But the extent and intensity of this year's fires left few surviving trees in many areas.

Already ash forests in parts of Victoria had been hit by wildfire every four to five years, allowing less marketable tree species to take over or meadows to form.

"If a young ash forest is burned and killed and we can't resow it, then it is lost," Bassett said.

The changing landscape has major implications for Australia's diverse wildlife. The fires in Eungella National Park, for example, threaten "frogs and reptiles that don't live anywhere else," said University of Queensland ecologist Diana Fisher.

Fires typically burn through the forest in a patchwork pattern, leaving unburned refuges from which plant and animal species can spread. However, the megafires raging in parts of Australia are consuming everything in their path and leaving little room for that kind of recovery, said Griffith University's Kitching.

In both Australia and western North America, climate experts say, fires will continue burning with increased frequency as warming temperatures and drier weather transform ecosystems around the globe.

The catastrophic scale of blazes in so many places offers the "clearest signal yet" that climate change is driving fire activity, said Leroy Westerling, a fire science professor at the University of Alberta.

"It's in Canada, California, Greece, Portugal, Australia," Westerling said. "This portends what we can expect—

a new reality. I prefer not to use the term 'new normal'... This is more like a downward spiral."

Forests can shift locations over time. However, that typically unfolds over thousands of years, not the decades over which the climate has been warming.

Most of the nearly 25,000 square miles (64,000 square kilometers) that have burned in Victoria and New South Wales has been forest, according to scientists in New South Wales and the Victorian government.

By comparison, an average of about 1,600 square miles (4,100 square kilometers) of forest burned annually in Australia dating back to 2002, according to data compiled by NASA research scientist Niels Andela and University of Maryland research professor Louis Giglio.

Unlike grasslands, which see the vast majority of Australia's huge annual wildfire damage, forests are unable to regenerate in a couple of years. "For forests, we're talking about decades, particularly in more arid climates," Andela said.

Most forested areas can be expected to eventually regenerate, said Owen Price, a senior research fellow at the University of Wollongong specializing in bushfire risk management. But he said repeated fires will make it more likely that some will become grasslands or open woodlands.

Price and others have started thinking up creative ways to combat the changes, such as installing sprinkler systems in rainforests to help protect them against drought and fire, or shutting down forested areas to all visitors during times of high fire danger to prevent accidental ignitions.

Officials may also need to radically rethink accepted forest management practices, said Pfautsch, the researcher from Western Sydney.

That could involve planting trees in areas where they might not be suitable now but would be in 50 years as climate change progresses.

"We cannot expect species will move 200 kilometers (125 miles) to reach a cooler climate," said Pfautsch. "It's not looking like there's a reversal trend in any of this. It's only accelerating."

Health & Wellness

This advertorial
is sponsored by



Tan Siu Lin
Foundation



Plant foods supply protein as well.

DREAMSTIME/TNS be everything we love about beef except it's not beef. Protein in a 4-ounce serving: 19 grams.

Exact ingredients in the Impossible burger are copyrighted but I did find this list on the company website: water, textured wheat protein, coconut oil, potato protein, natural flavors, leghemoglobin, yeast extract, salt, soy protein isolate, konjac gum, zinc and B-vitamins.

What is leghemoglobin? It's the ingredient—manufactured from genetically engineered yeast—that this company says makes their product taste like meat.

And now ... ready for this? ... there is a meatless "air-based meat" made with elements found in the air—carbon dioxide, oxygen and nitrogen. These are blended with water and minerals and fermented to produce protein. Yum.

Real beef is produced the old-fashioned way by cows who eat plant food. It has one ingredient: beef, which is naturally rich in protein (23 grams in 4 ounces), iron, zinc, selenium and B-vitamins.

How do these products rate nutritionally? Ounce for ounce, a Morningstar veggie burger contains less saturated fat than lean beef. Yet—because it contains more processed ingredients—it has 5 times more sodium than fresh beef. The Impossible burger has no cholesterol (no plant food does), but it has more calories, fat and saturated fat (the type of fat we are called to reduce in our diet) than a burger made with lean ground beef.

Some would tell us these meat-type substitutes are better for the environment. I'll comment on that in a future column. For now, remember that we have choices. Let's try our best to base them on sound information.

Barbara Quinn is a registered dietitian and certified diabetes educator affiliated with Community Hospital of the Monterey Peninsula. She is the author of "Quinn-Essential Nutrition" (Westbow Press, 2015). Email her at to barbara@quinnessentialnutrition.com.

QUINN ON NUTRITION

Meat substitutes

By BARBARA QUINN
THE MONTEREY COUNTY HERALD

There seems to be a lot of clamoring to replace real meat in the marketplace. Here are some things to consider:

We need protein. In fact, experts predict that within the next 30 years, the world will need to produce 50% more protein to adequately feed everyone on this planet. Some people

feel that needs to be done without the help of animals, who provide high quality protein from poultry, fish, eggs, meat, milk and cheese. And they also aren't too fond of the potential to harness insects as a food source for our expanding world population.

Plant foods supply protein as well. And meat substitutes made with soy, quinoa, peas and other vegetable proteins have been around for decades. Here are the ingredients (from most to least) in Morningstar Farms

Grillers Original Veggie Burger, for example: water, wheat gluten, soy flour, vegetable oils, egg whites, calcium caseinate, corn starch, onion and soy powders, methylcellulose, onion and carrot concentrates, salt, natural flavor, soy protein isolate, garlic powder, spices, sugar, gum acacia, whey, yeast extract, xanthan gum, tomato starch, tomato paste and onion juice concentrate. Protein? 16 grams in a 2-ounce patty, about what you'd get in 2 eggs.

Recently we've heard about cell-based, cultured or "cultivated" meats. These products are grown in a laboratory from the cells of real animals. While some may argue that this is real meat—grown in a lab instead of a cow—others question whether it really is and believe it should be clearly labeled (if and when it comes to market).

Now we have the Impossible burger that pops up on every other commercial. This product claims to

Why it's not too late to get a flu shot

By HELENA OLIVIERO
THE ATLANTA JOURNAL-CONSTITUTION

We're in the throes of the flu season, but with months left, doctors are emphasizing it's not too late to get your flu shot.

The flu vaccine remains the best form of defense against the flu, according to Children's Healthcare of Atlanta System Medical Director of Infectious Diseases Dr. Andi Shane and other doctors and experts here and across the country. It's Shane's No. 1 tip for protecting you and your family from the flu.

While getting a vaccine earlier in the season is better, there is still a lot of the season to go and vaccination now could still provide benefit. It takes about two weeks after vaccination for antibodies to develop in the body and provide protection against influenza virus infection.

Limited testing data is suggesting

this year's flu vaccine may not be a good match for Influenza B which is widely circulating right now. It appears to be a better match for Influenza A, which is picking up across the country. But experts stress the vaccine can also offer protection even if you come down with the illness. It lessens the severity of the flu and reduces the chance of experiencing complications, health officials said. Getting a vaccine can also reduce the length of the flu if you do get sick.

Go to HealthMap Vaccine Finder vaccinefinder.org to find a location close to you for a flu shot.

The flu season got off to an unusually early start with sporadic cases emerging in August. The flu season, which usually ramps up in October and peaks between December and February, is now severe and widespread. The season can also extend into May—like it did the 2018-19 season.



While getting a vaccine earlier in the season is better, there is still a lot of the season to go and vaccination now could still provide benefit.

Almost 1 in 10 patient visits (9.6%) to doctors were for the flu during the week ending Dec. 21, according to the latest surveillance report from the Georgia Department of Public Health. That marks a jump from 6.7% the week before.

Flu levels are much higher than around this time during the previous two flu seasons. That includes the

brutal 2017-2018 flu season, which turned out to be one of the worst on record in some states. Flu activity didn't surge that season until after Christmas.

There are other steps you can take to avoid getting and spreading the flu. Common sense flu prevention techniques really make a difference. Frequently wash your hands with soap and warm water. (If water is

not available, alcohol-based gels are the next best thing.) If you are sick, cover your coughs and sneezes with the inside of your elbow or a tissue that is then discarded. Also, don't go to work, and don't have your children go to school, when sick.

WHAT TO DO IF YOU GET THE FLU

If you do get sick and think you may have the flu, contact your health care provider right away, particularly if you or family members are at high risk for serious flu complications—young children (under the age of 5), those over 65, pregnant women and those with chronic health conditions such as diabetes or asthma. Even young, healthy adults should call their doctor if symptoms don't improve or get worse after three to four days of illness. There are antivirals such as Tamiflu or Relenza that can reduce the duration of flu symptoms but the medication needs to be started within 48 hours of the onset of symptoms to be most effective.

Life & Style

Harry, Meghan to quit royal jobs, give up 'highness' titles

LONDON (AP)—Goodbye, your royal highnesses. Hello, life as—almost—ordinary civilians.

Prince Harry and wife Meghan will no longer use the titles “royal highness” or receive public funds for their work under a deal that lets the couple step aside as working royals, Buckingham Palace announced Saturday.

Releasing details of the dramatic split triggered by the couple’s unhappiness with life under media scrutiny, the palace said Harry and Meghan will cease to be working members of the royal family when the new arrangements take effect in the “spring of 2020.”

The radical break is more complete than the type of arrangement anticipated 10 days ago when the royal couple stunned Britain with an abrupt announcement that they wanted to step down. They said they planned to combine some royal duties with private work in a “progressive” plan, but that is no longer on the table.

Harry and Meghan will no longer use the titles His Royal Highness and Her Royal Highness but will retain them, leaving the possibility that the couple might change their minds and return sometime in the future.

Harry’s late mother, Diana, was stripped of the Her Royal Highness title when she and Prince Charles divorced.

They will be known as Harry, Duke of Sussex, and Meghan, Duchess of Sussex. Harry will remain a prince and sixth in line to the British throne.

The agreement also calls



In this Tuesday, July 10, 2018 file photo Britain’s Queen Elizabeth II, and Meghan the Duchess of Sussex and Prince Harry watch a flypast of Royal Air Force aircraft pass over Buckingham Palace in London. Prince Harry and Meghan Markle are to no longer use their HRH titles and will repay £2.4 million of taxpayer’s money spent on renovating their Berkshire home, Buckingham Palace announced Saturday, Jan. 18, 2020.

AP PHOTO/MATT DUNHAM, FILE

for Meghan and Harry to repay 2.4 million pounds (\$3.1 million) in taxpayers’ money spent renovating a house for them near Windsor Castle, Frogmore Cottage. The use of

public funds to transform the house’s five separate apartments into a spacious single family home for them had raised ire in the British press. They will continue to use Frogmore Cottage as their base in England.

The deal came after days of talks among royals sparked

by Meghan and Harry’s announcement last week that they wanted to step down as senior royals and live part-time in Canada.

The couple’s departure is a wrench for the royal family, and Queen Elizabeth II did say earlier this week that she wished the couple had wanted to remain full-time royals, but she had warm words for them in a statement Saturday.

The 93-year-old queen said she was pleased that “together we have found a constructive

and supportive way forward for my grandson and his family. Harry, Meghan and Archie will always be much loved members of my family.”

“I recognize the challenges they have experienced as a result of intense scrutiny over the last two years and support their wish for a more independent life,” Elizabeth said.

“It is my whole family’s hope that today’s agreement allows them to start building a happy and peaceful new life,” she added.

Despite the queen’s kind words, the new arrangement will represent an almost complete break from life as working royals, especially for Harry. As a devoted Army veteran and servant to the crown, the prince carried out dozens of royal engagements each year,

Royal expert and author Penny Junor said the new setup will benefit both sides of the family.

“There are no blurred lines. They are starting afresh and they are going with the queen’s

Kardashian West pursues criminal justice reform in TV show

PASADENA, Calif. (AP)—Kim Kardashian West is a step closer to becoming a lawyer, having finished her first year of study as an apprentice.

She told The Associated Press on Saturday that her next step is taking the “baby bar,” so-called because it’s a one-day exam. If she passes, she plans to study for another three years and then take the California bar exam.

“I’m super-motivated, and I really want to see it through,” she said in an interview after promoting a television documentary on criminal justice reform. “There’s obviously times where I’m overwhelmed and stressed and feel like I have a lot on my plate. My kids know that I’m in school just like they are. It’s 20 hours a week, so it is a lot of my time.”

“Kim Kardashian West: The

Justice Project” airs April 5 on Oxygen. The two-hour documentary shows her being visibly moved by prison inmates recounting their stories of landing behind bars. She talks to their families and friends, lobbies public officials and consults with their attorneys as well as her own.

It features four cases, including a sex trafficking victim and a woman who murdered the family member who molested her. Each of them believe they received unfair sentences; two of them end up being released.

“Once you hear the circumstances that led them to make those decisions, your heart would completely open up,” Kardashian West told the AP. “I hope that this is a step to opening up people’s hearts and minds. And then hopefully they can help with changing

blessing, I think it is the best of all worlds,” she said.

It is not yet clear whether Harry and Meghan will continue to receive financial support from Harry’s father, Prince Charles, who used revenue from the Duchy of Cornwall to help fund his activities and those of his wife and sons.

The duchy, chartered in 1337, produced more than 20 million pounds (\$26 million) in revenue last year. It is widely regarded as private money, not public funds, so Charles may opt to keep details of its disbursal private. Much of the royals’ wealth comes from private holdings.

Though Harry and Meghan will no longer represent the queen, the palace said they would “continue to uphold the values of Her Majesty” while carrying out their private charitable work.

The withdrawal of Harry from royal engagements will increase the demands on his brother, Prince William, and William’s wife, Kate, the Duchess of Cambridge.

Buckingham Palace did not disclose who will pay for the couple’s security going forward. It currently is taxpayer-funded and carried out primarily by a special unit of the Metropolitan Police, also known as Scotland Yard.

“There are well established independent processes to determine the need for publicly funded security,” it said.

Harry and Meghan have grown increasingly uncomfortable with constant media scrutiny since the birth in May of their son, Archie. They married in 2018 in a ceremony that drew a worldwide TV audience.

Jury of 7 men, 5 women selected for Weinstein rape trial

NEW YORK (AP)—A jury of seven men and five women was selected Friday for Harvey Weinstein’s rape trial after an arduous, two-week process in which scores of people were dismissed because they had already made up their minds about the disgraced Hollywood mogul.

Opening statements are expected Wednesday in the case against the 67-year-old executive who has come to be seen as the archvillain of the #MeToo era.

The once powerful and feared studio boss behind such Oscar winners as “Pulp Fiction” and “Shakespeare in Love” is charged with raping a woman in a New York City hotel room in 2013 and forcibly performing a sex act on another at his apartment in 2006. He has said any sexual

activity was consensual. If convicted, he could get life in prison.

During jury selection, prosecutors accused Weinstein’s lawyers of systematically trying to keep young women off the panel, though the final gender makeup of the jury turned out to be more closely balanced.

For its part, the defense raised an outcry and demanded a mistrial because one of the jurors is the author of an upcoming novel involving young women dealing with predatory older men. The request was denied, but Weinstein’s lawyers continued to claim outside court that the juror had withheld the information on her questionnaire.

“We got the best jury we could get under the circum-

stances,” defense attorney Donna Rotunno told reporters. “I’m obviously not happy with what happened in the end there. I think that was an absolutely ridiculous decision.”

The defense said it wasn’t specifically trying to exclude young women but didn’t want jurors too young to understand the way men and women interacted in the early 1990s.

“That was a different time in New York and on planet Earth,” said another Weinstein attorney, Arthur Aidala,

A stooped Weinstein, shuffling out of the courthouse with the use of a walker because of recent back surgery, had no comment when asked his thoughts on jury selection. “Ask Donna!” he said, referring to Rotunno.

“Justice Project” airs April 5 on Oxygen. The two-hour documentary shows her being visibly moved by prison inmates recounting their stories of landing behind bars. She talks to their families and friends, lobbies public officials and consults with their attorneys as well as her own.

It features four cases, including a sex trafficking victim and a woman who murdered the family member who molested her. Each of them believe they received unfair sentences; two of them end up being released.

“Once you hear the circumstances that led them to make those decisions, your heart would completely open up,” Kardashian West told the AP. “I hope that this is a step to opening up people’s hearts and minds. And then hopefully they can help with changing

some actual laws that really do have to be changed.”

Vince DiPersio, an executive producer of “The Justice Project,” said Kardashian West was taking on a “fair amount of risk” by advocating for the release of prisoners.

“She is a nationally known figure, and she has a big brand. God forbid someone gets out and does something terrible, but Kim is willing to take that risk,” he said.

Kardashian West said that no one she’s helped has tried to exploit her entertainment industry ties for additional assistance. At the same time, the 39-year-old reality star and beauty and fashion mogul refers them to organizations that help them find jobs.

“I love seeing the choices that they make in the exciting projects that they’re working on outside,” she said.

2 years after 'step up,' Grammys step into another mess

NEW YORK (AP)—The leadership at the Recording Academy thought they were in the clear: After the Academy's then-CEO made comments that seemed to belittle women at the height of the

#MeToo movement, leaving the organization in a firestorm that further exposed their diversity problems, it set out to make a change.

It issued a task force focused on inclusion. It hired Michelle

Obama's former chief of staff to run it and also launched an initiative to create more opportunities for female music engineers and producers.

And they hired Deborah Dugan as its new CEO.

But a measly 169 days after she became the first woman to officially lead the academy, Dugan is out, and the Academy—just days before its 2020 awards show—is in upheaval again.

Paris Hilton reveals private side in upcoming documentary

PASADENA, Calif. (AP)—Having thrown her life open for years, it's hard to believe there isn't much the public doesn't know about Paris Hilton.

But wait, there is.

The 38-year-old socialite often described as famous for being famous reveals a private side of herself in "This is Paris," a YouTube Originals documentary premiering in May.

"It's very emotional this movie, it's very raw, it's very authentic," an unusually somber and admittedly nervous Hilton told a TV critics meeting on Saturday. "It's basically my entire life."

In the documentary, she

speaks publicly for the first time about incidents from her past and pivotal moments in her life.

Emmy-winning director Alexandra Dean ("Bombshell: The Hedy Lamarr Story") initially turned down the project, having gotten her fill of seeing Hilton on countless magazine covers while living in Europe. Dean changed her mind after hearing a particular story described as "heartbreaking trauma" involving Hilton that is revealed in the film.

Hilton herself was reluctant to take a meeting about

the project "because I wasn't ready to show myself."

Eventually, she agreed and the film crew followed her around the world for a year.

"I talk about things that are very hard to talk about," Hilton said. "It was an amazing experience, but also very scary. Watching the film for the first time, I was like, 'Can we cut that out?' I was freaking out but they have total control over the whole film."

The documentary addresses the time a teen-aged Hilton spent at a residential treatment



Hilton

center for emotionally and behaviorally troubled youth in Utah.

Hilton's only sister, Nicky Rothschild, rarely gives interviews but agreed to participate. Their mother, Kathy Hilton, also appears.

"There's so many 'yes' people around and Nicky always tells me the truth," Hilton said. "She's my best friend and my other half."

At times, Hilton comes off as lonely in private even as her public image portrays her as the life of every party and club she works as a DJ. She also describes herself as shy "which most people won't believe either," she said.

Florida Georgia Line, Mary J. Blige and more. "Until proven otherwise I stand for Deb. #standwithdeb."

Legendary rapper Chuck D wrote an open letter Friday and defended Dugan.

"I salute Deborah Dugan for her truth and courage to try and effect change. As always, a bunch of ignorant, testosterone-fueled, usually old white men stop progress and screw it up," he wrote.

When asked about Dugan's leave in an interview Friday about other topics, John Legend said: "I truly have no comment because I have no idea what happened."

"It was definitely shocking to say the least for someone that they searched so long to find to ... be put on administrative leave, or whatever, because of misconduct. I don't know any details around it but makes you wonder what happened," added

Legend, who is member of the academy's Los Angeles chapter and is friends with and has collaborated musically with Dugan's interim replacement, music producer and Board Chair Harvey Mason Jr.

Winfrey details her decision to withdraw from Simmons film

NEW YORK (AP)—Oprah Winfrey said Friday that Russell Simmons attempted to pressure her about her involvement with a documentary in which several women detail sexual abuse allegations against the rap mogul, but his efforts were not what prompted her to leave the project.

"He did reach out multiple times and attempted to pressure me," Winfrey told The Associated Press through a spokesperson on Friday. It was not anything Simmons said that prompted Winfrey to withdraw from the "On the Record" film,



Winfrey

shared by the film's directors. "On the Record" had been part of her partnership with Apple, which no longer will distribute the documentary.

Winfrey, who herself has spoken openly of been sexually abused, announced she was leaving as executive producer on Jan. 10, saying that more work was needed and that and the filmmakers were

"not aligned" in their "creative vision." The film's producers, Impact Partners, said in a statement earlier this week that the movie was "ready for Sundance."

"We have always championed the voices of those who have been wrongly silenced. The women in this film have made a great sacrifice by coming forward to tell their stories in their own words. We are honored to support them," the Impact statement reads. "We stand firmly behind the work of the intrepid filmmakers who continue to break new ground by advancing important stories in the public interest."

The AP does not typically name alleged victims of sexual abuse, but Dixon has told her story publicly, including on CBS This Morning earlier this week.

Portrait found in gallery's walls verified as missing Klimt



An Italian Carabiniere, paramilitary police officer, stands near a painting which was found last December near an art gallery and believed to be the missing Gustav Klimt's painting 'Portrait of a Lady' during a press conference in Piacenza, Italy, Friday, Jan. 17, 2020. AP

PIACENZA, Italy (AP)—Art experts have confirmed that a painting discovered hidden inside an Italian art gallery's walls last month is Gustav Klimt's "Portrait of a Lady," which was stolen from the gallery nearly 23 years ago.

The authentication of the painting announced Friday solved one of the art world's enduring mysteries - where did the missing work end up? - but left several questions unanswered, including who had taken it and whether it ever left the museum's property.

A gardener at the Ricci Oddi Modern Art Gallery in the northern city of Piacenza who

was clearing away ivy noticed a small panel door on a wall outside and opened it. Inside the space, he found a plastic bag containing a painting that appeared to be the missing masterpiece.

"It's with no small emotion that I can tell you the work is authentic," Piacenza Prosecutor Ornella Chicca told reporters Friday while two police officers stood on either side of an easel bearing the recovered painting.

"Portrait of a Lady" depicts a young woman sensually glancing over her shoulder against a dreamy moss green background. Klimt finished the painting in 1917, the year

before he died. The Ricci Oddi gallery acquired it in 1925 and reported it missing in February 1997.

Since the gardener's discovery on Dec. 10, the canvas had been kept in a vault of a local branch of Italy's central bank while experts used infrared radiation and other non-invasive techniques to determine if it was the original "Portrait of a Lady."

Experts said the painting was in remarkably good condition. One of the few signs of damage was a scratch near the edge of the canvas that may have resulted "from a clumsy effort to remove the portrait

from its frame," said Anna Selleri, an art restorer from the National Gallery in Bologna.

The experts who did the verification work found persuasive evidence in the work of their peers more than two decades ago.

An Italian high school student, preparing for her graduation exams in 1996, noticed striking similarities between the painting that would go missing a year later and an earlier Klimt work of a woman with a similar posture and gaze but wearing a hat and scarf, accessories that the artist didn't include in "Portrait of a Lady."

Eminem drops surprise album, advocates changes to gun laws

Rapper Eminem once again dropped a surprise album, releasing "Music to Be Murdered By" on Friday—along with a video that calls for changes to gun laws.



Eminem

gov. Make your voice heard and help change gun laws in America."

A link to the music video on Eminem's website encourages viewers to contact or visit several gun violence prevention

organizations, including Everytown for Gun Safety and Sandy Hook Promise.

The cover art features blood spatter and a bearded Eminem clad in a suit and fedora and holding a shovel. An alternate cover features the same splatter, with a now hatless Eminem holding both a hatchet and a gun to his head in an homage to Alfred Hitchcock's 1958 album of the same name: "Inspired by the master, Uncle Alfred!" Eminem tweeted.

"Music to Be Murdered By" is Eminem's 11th studio album, according to his website.

Among many collaborators, the album features Ed Sheeran, Skylar Grey, Anderson .Paak and Juice WRLD, the 21-year-old rapper who died in December.

The follow-up to 2018's "Kamikaze"—also released without warning—was announced on Twitter just after midnight.

The Detroit rapper's new music video for "Darkness," one of the album's 20 tracks, depicts a shooting at a concert. The lyrics and storyline of the video specifically allude to the 2017 mass shooting at a music festival in Las Vegas that left 58 people dead, making it the deadliest mass shooting in modern U.S. history. It closes with audio and video footage of news broadcasts from other recent mass shooting around the U.S. and an appeal to register to vote.

"When will this end? When enough people care," reads the text at the end of the video. "Register to vote at vote.

Report: Hank Azaria to quit voicing Apu on 'The Simpsons'

LOS ANGELES (AP)—Hank Azaria says he has no plans to continue voicing the character of Apu on "The Simpsons," according to an industry blog. But that isn't to say the Indian immigrant convenience store owner Azaria brought alive for 30 years won't live on.

Producers and Fox Broadcasting Co. wouldn't confirm to The Associated Press Azaria's exit or an end to Apu, a recurring character that has



Azaria

drawn criticism for reinforcing racial stereotypes. There was no immediate reply Saturday from Azaria's publicist.

The actor, who is white, indicated Friday to slashfilm.com that there was no resistance to phasing out his voice.

"We all made the decision together," Azaria said. "We all agreed on it. We all feel

like it's the right thing and (feel) good about it."

Apu Nahasapeemapetilon runs the Kwik-E-Mart, a popular convenience store in the animated sitcom's Springfield. Apu is known for his catchphrase, "Thank you, come again." Azaria's first turn as Apu came in the first season's episode "The Telltale Head"

in 1990.

Azaria speculated that among options going forward is transitioning Apu's voice to an Indian actor.

In 2017, comedian Hari Kondabolu put out a documentary, "The Problem with Apu," that examined the character's cultural impact. Asked in the film's aftermath if he had watched the documentary, Azaria said:

"Thank you for asking me. Yes, of course, I did see

it, and let me see if I can tell you how I feel about that. The idea that anybody, young or old, past or present, was bullied or teased or worse based on the character of Apu on 'The Simpsons,' the voice or any other tropes of the character is distressing," he said. "And especially in post-9/11 America, the idea that anybody was marginalized based on it or had a hard time was very upsetting to me personally and professionally."

Mom regrets her marriage set a poor example for kids

DEAR ABBY: I married someone who turned out to be very abusive and controlling of me and the kids. I felt powerless to leave with them because of the emotional control, and I had no way to make a living to support them.

They are all adults now, and three of them have been in unhealthy relationships. I know their example of a good marriage or a long-term relationship was awful because of how their father treated me. I live with the guilt and pain of that, but beyond that, seeing three of my four kids in similar abusive relationships is painful.

When two of my girls reach out to me when things are not going well, I'm supportive and I try to be helpful. I guess my question is, given my example of an unhealthy marriage, will any advice I give them fall on deaf ears? Should I just listen? I don't feel like anything I say will help.

UNHAPPY MOM IN THE SOUTH

DEAR UNHAPPY MOM: Of course you should listen, but that doesn't mean you shouldn't also weigh in on what is happening to them. It could be very helpful if you point out to them that what they witnessed while growing up was not normal—and explain what IS acceptable behavior in an adult relationship.

You might also apologize for not being stronger earlier on, and explain that their father had eroded your self-esteem to such an extent that you were paralyzed. If their experiences mirror your own, point that out, too, and offer

them the number of the National Domestic Violence Hotline (800-799-7233). If you do, it might not only open their eyes, but also give them the escape they need.

DEAR ABBY: My siblings and I have always enjoyed spending quality time together, and every eight to 10 weeks or so we get together for "Siblings Day." There's no set schedule or particular date; one of us will call the others and say, "I need some siblings time." (There are five of us, all over 60.) Sometimes we meet at one of our homes and play board games or cards, or dance in the living room and enjoy the laughter that comes with it. It's a time when we just enjoy being family.

Our brother's lady friend, a very nice person, has arrived, uninvited, the last three times we have gotten together. Talk about a party-pooper. We have explained, as graciously as we know how, that these times are very important to us. Our brother has asked her to please allow us this time for family, but she just laughs and says it's silly for grown people to be so needy of each other. (She has six siblings who live close by and with whom she keeps in contact.)

We all love each other and are aware that life is truly short and that we are very lucky to still have this close bond when so many families do not. Can you suggest what we can do to make her understand what this time together means to us and that she is the ultimate uninvited guest?

JUST THE SIBS IN LOUISIANA

DEAR SIBS: What gall! Your brother's girlfriend does

Report: Disney dropping the 'Fox' from movie studio names

NEW YORK (AP)—Disney is dropping the word "Fox" from the movie studios it acquired as part of last year's \$71 billion purchase of Fox's entertainment business, according to published reports. Disney will still run them

as separate studios within the company. But trade publication Variety reported that 20th Century Fox will become 20th Century Studios, while Fox Searchlight Pictures will be Searchlight Pictures. Variety said the studios' lo-

gos are largely unchanged except for the removal of the Fox name.

Variety said the Fox name created brand confusion with Disney because Fox News and the Fox broadcast network are owned by Rupert Murdoch's

Fox Corp., while the movie studios now belong to Disney.

The news outlet said a decision has yet to be made on Disney's Fox television production businesses, 20th Century Fox Television and Fox 21 Television Studio.

Olympic rings arrive in host city on barge into Tokyo Bay



AP A worker installs scaffolding on the Statue of Liberty replica as a barge carrying the Olympic Rings floats in the water Friday, Jan. 17, 2020, in the Odaiba district of Tokyo.

TOKYO (AP)—The Olympic rings have arrived in Tokyo.

They sailed into Tokyo Bay on Friday on a barge and will stay there until the Olympics open on July 24 and close on Aug. 9.

The blue, black, red, yellow, and green rings will be replaced after that by the symbol for the Paralympics Games, which open on Aug. 25.

The symbol for the Paralympics is called "agitos," which resembles three brush strokes in red, blue, and green. The word in Latin means "I move."

The five Olympic rings are gigantic. They stand 15.3 meters high—about 50 feet tall—and are 32.6 meters from end to end—about 100 feet in length.

"We decided to install the Olympic rings at this time because we wanted to do it first thing in the Olympic year," said Kenichi Kimura, an Olympic official with the Tokyo Metropolitan Government.

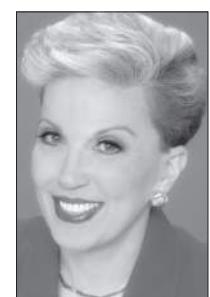
The location of the rings in Tokyo Bay is the Odaiba Marine Park, which is the venue for triathlon and distance swimming. The venue is a made-for-television location, with a view across the water of the Tokyo skyline and the Tokyo's Rainbow bridge.

Many of Tokyo's venues are located around the bay.

The rings will be the center of attention on Jan. 24 when Tokyo will note its six-months-to-go milestone with a fireworks display.

DEAR ABBY

By ABIGAIL VAN BUREN
UNIVERSAL PRESS SYNDICATE



Dear Abby is written by Abigail Van Buren, also known as Jeanne Phillips, and was founded by her mother, Pauline Phillips. Contact Dear Abby at www.DearAbby.com or P.O. Box 69440, Los Angeles, CA 90069.

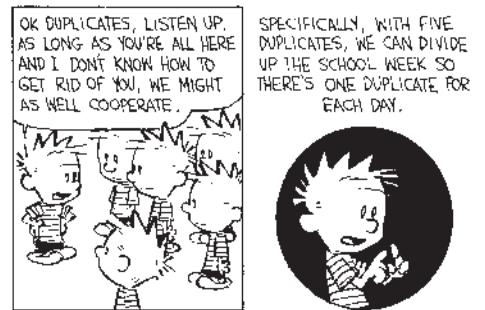
not have the right to judge your family spending time with one another as "silly." It's the height of rudeness. Please point out to him that her behavior is an important red flag for him to consider. The next time she drops by uninvited, your brother should put his foot down and not let her intrude.

DEAR READERS: Today we remember the birthday of Rev. Martin Luther King Jr., who in 1968 was martyred in the cause of civil rights. In that time of insanity, his was a voice of reason when he eloquently preached, "Love is the only force capable of transforming an enemy into a friend."

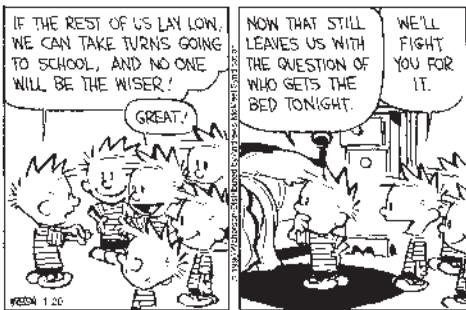
Abby shares more than 100 of her favorite recipes in two booklets: "Abby's Favorite Recipes" and "More Favorite Recipes by Dear Abby." Send your name and mailing address, plus check or money order for \$16 (U.S. funds) to: Dear Abby, Cookbook Set, P.O. Box 447, Mount Morris, IL 61054-0447. (Shipping and handling are included in the price.)

Pastimes

Calvin and Hobbes



By Bill Waterson



Garfield®



By Jim Davis



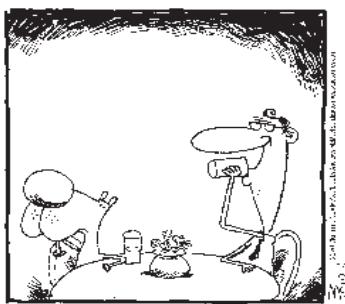
Adam@home



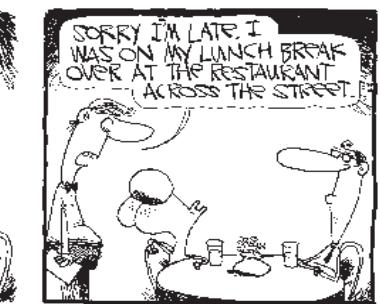
By Bryan Basset



The Duplex



By Glenn McCoy



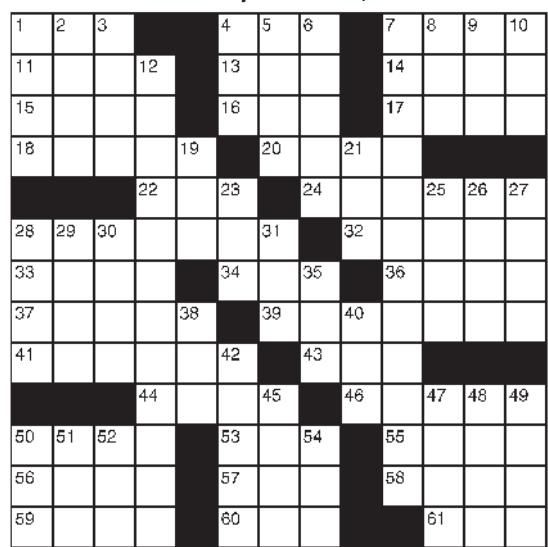
CROSSWORD

By Eugene Sheffer

ACROSS	43	Impose	12	Play by
1 Luau	44	Victor's	1 Genie's	Noel
souvenir		cry	home	Coward
4 PC key	46	Presti-	2 List-	19 Up to
7 Powerful	gious	prize	ending	21 Recede
wind			abbr.	23 Succor
11 On	50	Balkan	3 Corn Belt	25 "If I
13 — Aviv		native	state	Were —"
14 Black, in	53	Sailor	4 LAX info	(Beyoncé
verse	55	Prego	5 Narcis-	song)
15 Bryn —		rival	sist's love	26 Showroom
16 Carte	56	Bern's	6 Red	sample
lead-in		river	27 Jacob's	27 Jacob's
17 On deck	57	Perfume	brother	brother
18 Braid of		label	Barton	28 Chumps
hair	58	word	7 Small-	29 Bassoon's
20 Gratis			town	kin
22 By way	59	Pa-	8 Honest	30 Pepper
of		nache	politician	31 Branch
24 Rub the	60	Boot	9 Bagel	35 Shrill bark
wrong		camp	topper	38 Stitch
way	61	VIPs	10 Tolkien	40 Day light?
28 Neighbor		Your	grazer	42 Thesaurus
of Kenya		61	creature	compiler
32 Innocents				45 Ark builder
33 Slightly				47 Hay
34 Parched				bundle
36 — Linda,				48 Alike (Fr.)
Calif.				49 Galoot
37 Fishing				50 Airline to
rods				Sweden
39 Message				51 Trail the
from a				pack
distant				52 Museum
lover				display
41 eBay				54 Purchase



Last Friday's Answer 01/20

**STUMPED?**

For answers to today's crossword, call 1-900-226-5956 99¢ per minute, touchtone/rotary phones. (18+ only.) A King Features service, NYC.

CELEBRITIES BORN ON THIS DAY: Skeet Ulrich, 50; Rainn Wilson, 54; Bill Maher, 64; David Lynch, 74.

Happy Birthday: Refuse to let someone beat you at your own game. Put your energy to good use, and use your intelligence to navigate your way to a higher position. Challenge yourself mentally, and pick up new skills, information and insight that will help you expand your interests, ability to earn, reputation and status. Walk away from dishonest or indulgent people. Your numbers are 8, 11, 17, 23, 29, 35, 41.

TAURUS (April 20-May 20): You may desire change, but first, take a closer look at the consequences. You'll achieve positive results if you do the groundwork to ensure success. Someone will probably shed some light on a dicey situation. **★★★**

GEMINI (May 21-June 20): Don't feel you have to make a grand entrance. Let your intelligence lead the way, and you will control the fallout from someone who is trying to make you look bad. An open discussion will help you maintain control. **★★**

CANCER (June 21-July 22): Ease into change. Do your due diligence, and question the logistics and motives behind an offer. Before you accept, consider what you will

have to give in return. Make a counteroffer, but be prepared to go it alone. **★★**

LEO (July 23-Aug. 22): Get pumped up and ready to take action. Share your thoughts and feelings to find out where you stand. Take the information offered and consider what's best for you. Connect with people from your past who can help you now. **★★★★**

ARIES (March 21-April 19): Take advantage of an opportunity someone offers. Now is not the time to be too proud to accept help. Something you say or do for someone will be enough of a payback to warrant what you receive. Be grateful. **★★★★**

TAURUS (April 20-May 20): You may desire change, but first, take a closer look at the consequences. You'll achieve positive results if you do the groundwork to ensure success. Someone will probably shed some light on a dicey situation. **★★**

GEMINI (May 21-June 20): Don't feel you have to make a grand entrance. Let your intelligence lead the way, and you will control the fallout from someone who is trying to make you look bad. An open discussion will help you maintain control. **★★**

CANCER (June 21-July 22): Ease into change. Do your due diligence, and question the logistics and motives behind an offer. Before you accept, consider what you will

SAGITTARIUS (Nov. 22-Dec. 21): Wait and watch. Everything will fall into place as long as you don't overreact, instigate unnecessary change or are gullible to someone's pretenses. Gather facts before committing. Use your experience and intelligence, and do your own thing. **★★★**

EUGENIA LAST



THE LAST WORD IN ASTROLOGY

COURTESY 2007 UNIVERSAL PRESS SYNDICATE

CAPRICORN (Dec. 22-Jan. 19): Keep moving forward, regardless of what others do or say. You may not agree with everyone, but take what is offered that works for you, and give it a spin that will encourage success and ward off opposition. **★★**

ARQUARIUS (Jan. 20-Feb. 18): Take the initiative, and discuss the plans that can help you achieve your goals. Do the necessary groundwork, sum up the facts and prepare yourself to make a well-earned leap forward. Change requires work and patience. 4 stars

PISCES (Feb. 19-March 20): Too much, too fast equals setbacks. Concentrate on personal gains, physical strength and endurance, and overall preparation for what you want to achieve. Don't make a decision that will limit what you can accomplish. Expect change so you can adapt. **★☆**

Birthday Baby: You are broad-minded, enthusiastic and diligent. You are innovative and abrupt.

Visit Eugenialast.com, or join Eugenia on Twitter/Facebook/LinkedIn. Copyright 2020 Andrews McMeel Syndication

SUDOKU

Conceptis Sudoku

By Dave Green

3		7			1	
	4		9		7	5
5	2	8			4	
	7	2	9		1	
	9	3	2			
4	8	6	5			
9		1	8	2		
8	1	2	6			
7		5			3	

Difficulty Level ★

©2012 Conceptis Puzzles, Dist. by King Features Syndicate, Inc.

Sudoku is a number-placing puzzle based on a 9x9 grid with several given numbers. The object is to place the numbers 1 to 9 in the empty squares so that each row, each column and each 3x3 box contains the same number only once. The difficulty level of the Conceptis Sudoku increases from Monday to Saturday.

Last Friday's Answer

4	1	9	3	8	5	7	2	6
5	6	2	9	1	7	8	4	3
8	7	3	2	6	4	1	5	9
3	4	1	5	9	6	2	8	7
6	8	7	4	2	1	9	3	5
9	2	5	8	7	3	6	1	4
2	5	8	6	4	9	3	7	1
1	3	6	7	5	8	4	9	2
7	9	4	1	3	2	5	6	8

Difficulty Level ★★★★

WONDERWORD

By DAVID OUDET

HOW TO PLAY: All the words listed below appear in the puzzle — horizontally, vertically, diagonally and even backwords. Find them, circle each letter of the word and strike it off the list. The leftover letters spell the WONDERWORD.

ARE YOU A WORDIE?

S	T	L	L	E	P	S	Y	N	O	Y	M	S	
N	E	L	H	L	D	R	S	N	O	I	T	O	
E	R	L	O	A	O	I	G	P	E	S	N	R	
N	M	A	T	M	L	V	T	H	A	O	H	E	
T	S	S	E	I	N	B	E	C	I	I	P	H	
H	Y	M	E	L	T	O	H	D	T	W	A	P	
U	R	G	S	H	I	E	I	A	L	R	R	A	
S	A	N	P	E	C	H	C	S	L	O	I	G	
I	L	I	E	L	M	I	P	H	S	B	T	A	
A	U	N	A	P	N	A	L	E	E	R	O	N	
S	B	A	K	P	E	G	C	U	I	R	A	C	
T	A	E	M	S	S	A	G	E	G	Q	P	I	T
I	C	M	R	E	P	O	R	T	E	N	U	X	N
C	O	N	V	E	R	S	A	T	I	O	N	E	E
C	V	E	R	B	A	L	I	Z	E	G	N	A	L

© 2000 Andrews McMeel Syndication www.wonderword.com

CLASSIFIED ADS



**PLACE
YOUR
ADVERT
HERE!**

For opportunities
contact us at
235-6397

NEEDED IMMEDIATELY

NURSE ASSISTANT CERTIFIED OR NON-CERTIFIED

If non-certified,
willing to be trained with pay.
Obtain information
via email for salaries.
Open for CW1 Visa Holders.

Apply at:
Good Samaritan Rehab and Care Center
Stockton, California
Email: goodsamrehabcare@gmail.com

WHATZIT Solution: Breadwinner

RATES AND POLICIES

Saipan Tribune's Classifieds Section gives you the right exposure without hurting your pockets. Stretch your dollar and get results.

CLASSIFIED LINER ADS

Saipan Tribune also offers a complete 5-day run of liner ads, for as low as \$15 for garage sales, apartment rentals, help wanted, auto and more. You can choose from any of the packages below.

ADS

- 3-Liner \$15
- 5-Liner \$24

ADVERTISING DEADLINE

Classified Ads

Ads must be submitted before 12 noon 2 days prior to publication date

CANCELLATION

Classified Ads

Cancellations should be made before 12 noon of the day prior to date of publication.

REFUNDS

Refunds will only be made if cancellation deadlines are met. No refunds will be made once ad is already printed.

CHECK YOUR ADS

Saipan Tribune will not be responsible for errors after the first day of publication. Errors should be called in before noon of the issue date. Saipan Tribune reserves the right to place ads under proper headings and to revise copy when necessary.

ADVERTISING POLICY

All advertising in the Saipan Tribune are subject to applicable rate sheet, copies of which are available from the Advertising Sales Department (please call 235-8747, 235-2769 or 235-6397). All ads will be subject to approval prior to publication. We reserve the right to edit, refuse, reject or cancel any ad at any time. Also, Saipan Tribune reserves the right to place ads under proper headings and to revise copy when necessary.

WHATZIT?

Find the familiar phrase, saying or name in this arrangement of letters.

loaf

MEANS MORE

Please call 235-NEWS

Astros, Red Sox look ahead in wake of sign-stealing scandal

By KRISTIE RIEKEN and
JIMMY GOLEN
AP SPORTS WRITERS

 Players from two teams at the center of baseball's sign-stealing scandal faced their fans on Saturday for the first time since the Houston Astros and Boston Red Sox ousted their managers amid the fallout from the investigation into Houston's elaborate scheme.

The Astros and Red Sox held their annual fan fests on Saturday, and instead of discussing preparations for the season, players from both teams were left to answer questions about the cheating that resulted in both teams' managers being fired.

"It's a tough situation and as a team we have to stay together and go through this as a team like we've been doing, always," Houston star second baseman José Altuve said. "We have to talk about it at spring training and try not to let things in the past distract us for next year."

Houston manager AJ Hinch and general manager Jeff Luhnow were suspended for a year by MLB Commissioner Rob Manfred on Monday after he found illicit use of electronics to steal signs during the Astros' run to the 2017 World Series championship and again in the 2018 season. Team owner Jim Crane then fired both Hinch and Luhnow. Manager Alex Cora left the Red Sox on Tuesday after Manfred's report identified him as the ringleader of the sign-stealing scheme when he was the bench coach for the Astros in 2017.

Many Red Sox players talked Saturday about how much they liked and valued Cora and hated to see him go.

"I'm heartbroken about it," Boston designated hitter J.D. Martinez said. "I understood his side of it. He definitely didn't want to be a distraction. He was one of my favorite, if not my favorite, managers I've had."

The Astros were fined \$5 million, which is the maximum allowed under the Major League Constitution, and must forfeit their next two first- and second-round amateur draft picks.

The investigation found that the Astros used the video feed from a center field camera to see and decode the opposing catcher's signs. Players banged on a trash can to signal to batters what was coming, believing it would improve the batter's chances of getting a hit.

MLB is also looking into whether Cora installed a similar system in Boston after arriving the following year, when the Red Sox won the World Series. No conclusions



Boston Red Sox gather during the baseball team's fan fest Friday, Jan. 17, 2020, in Springfield, Mass. AP

kept repeating variations of the same phrase.

"The commissioner made his report, made his decision and the Astros made their decision and I have no further comment on it," Bregman said in some variation again and again.

After being pressed on if he plans to discuss the sign-stealing in the future, Bregman finally gave an answer that didn't seem as rehearsed.

"I think in the 2020 year our actions will speak louder than our words," he said.

Altuve and Bregman were the only two stars at Saturday's fan fest in Houston who were part of the 2017 championship team. Many of the other big names who helped the Astros win their first title, including World Series MVP George Springer, ace Justin Verlander and shortstop Carlos Correa, did not attend the daylong event where fans can interact with players.

Altuve was the AL MVP in 2017, and since the sign-stealing scandal broke, some have questioned whether he deserved the award. In recent days he's also been accused of wearing an electronic device under his jersey to tip pitches, which he vehemently denies. He was asked how it feels for people to call him a cheater.

"You don't want anybody to call you that," he said. "But ... I have two options. One is cry and one is go down and play the game and (perform) and help my team. And you know what one I am going to do."

MLB's investigation of Houston began after former Astros pitcher Mike Fiers, who played for Oakland last season, told The Athletic about the team's scheme to steal signs. Martinez said he has spoken to Fiers and gets why he came forward.

"I understand his side of it, being in that division, going against those guys. It's an uncomfortable position for him, but I understand why he did what he did," Martinez told reporters in Springfield, Massachusetts. "He obviously felt like he needed to and I understand it."

In Houston, as the Astros try to put the scandal behind them and focus on the future, Altuve, who has often been described as the heart and soul of the team, is confident it won't derail the Astros from another successful season.

"Everything will be fine," he said. "We're going to be in the World Series again. People don't believe it. But we will."

have been reached and there is no timetable; the Astros investigation took two months.

Martinez hopes MLB wraps up the investigation into the Red Sox soon so they can put this behind them.

"I'm excited for the investigation to get over with, so they can see there's nothing going on here," he said.

While the Astros were

meeting with fans in Houston, Toronto Blue Jays outfielder Randal Grichuk called for MLB to take away their World Series championship, now that it's been proven that they cheated.

"I mean, I would like to see that obviously. I bet the Dodgers would like to see that," Grichuk said. "I've got a few friends on the Dodgers

that are very disappointed that possibly two years in a row they lost due to a team going against the rules."

Many Boston players are trying not to focus on the investigation or what could be coming for the team, but instead simply trying to prepare like it's any other season.

"MLB's going to do what they have to do to look into

it," pitcher Nathan Eovaldi said. "I'm just trying to focus on baseball. I feel like it's going to pass, and everything's going to be fine."

While Altuve didn't have a problem answering numerous questions about the scandal, Houston third baseman Alex Bregman refused repeated attempts by reporters to get him to address what happened and

To stop sign stealing, MLB could fight tech with more tech

PHOENIX (AP)—If Major League Baseball really wants to stop its teams from electronically stealing signs, it might consider fighting technology with more technology.

In a sport that's increasingly driven by analytics and advancements, the majority of signs between players and coaches are still transmitted by low-tech hand signals that have been used for decades. Those hand signals are easily captured by the loads of video equipment around MLB stadiums that are used for television, replays and all kinds of stat tracking.

All that technology can be—and obviously has been—used for cheating. The Houston Astros were hit with stiff punishment on Monday after an MLB investigation found the team used electronics to steal signs during the franchise's run to the 2017 World Series title and again in the 2018 season. Manager AJ Hinch and general manager

Jeff Luhnow were suspended for a season and then fired by Astros owner Jim Crane.

Boston manager Alex Cora was fired on Tuesday for his involvement with the Astros' scheme and a separate ongoing investigation that involves the Red Sox.

Considering those developments, it might be wise to save players and coaches from themselves.

A partial model is already in place: The NCAA's Southeastern Conference has used electronic communication between coaches and catchers during league games for the past two seasons, which allows the coach to talk strategy with the catcher through an earpiece. It's much like the NFL, where an offensive coach tells plays to a quarterback.

No hand signals needed.

"I don't know why everyone isn't doing it—it's fantastic," LSU coach Paul Mainieri said. "It allows the coach to speak directly to the catcher

and speeds up the game."

In the SEC's system, the catcher still has to relay signs to the pitcher the old-fashioned way with hand signals, but Mainieri said there's no reason why pitchers couldn't eventually be included in the conversation. It's more common for coaches to call pitches in college, while catchers usually handle those responsibilities in the big leagues.

MLB expects to show players some prototypes of pitcher-catcher communication devices at spring training camps this year, but there are no plans to put any of them in place.

It would be unrealistic for a big league catcher to talk with the pitcher with a batter standing right next to him. Ole Miss coach Mike Bianco said there could be ways to work around that problem, suggesting that a clicker or some other device could be employed.

Former MLB catcher Buck Martinez, who played 17 sea-

sons, said the technology is available and today's generation of players would adapt to earpieces quickly if that's the route the sport wanted to take.

"I think most of these younger generation kids have earpieces in their ears most of the time anyway," Martinez said laughing, referencing the ubiquitous AirPods. "It's just normal. It would just be listening to baseball instead of music."

Under MLB's current setup, the sport has tried to draw a distinct line about what's allowed and what's not when it comes to sign stealing. It's a legal and time-honored part of baseball as long as it is done with the naked eye. Using technology is prohibited.

There's a wide variety of opinion about how much technological cheating is actually happening and how effective it can be. Arizona Diamondbacks general manager Mike Hazen said in November that he didn't think it was a widespread problem.

Tom Brady most dominant player in AFC championship history

 Tom Brady has been synonymous with the AFC championship for the last two decades.

Thirteen times he played for the Lamar Hunt Trophy and nine times he won it, besting MVP Patrick Mahomes in overtime, upending Blake Bortles in a classic comeback, denying Andrew Luck and Philip Rivers trips to the Super Bowl, foiling Ben Roethlisberger twice and Kordell Stewart once, and splitting two games with Joe Flacco.

Peyton Manning he bested once but three other times he lost to his rival in the conference title game.

Sunday's showdown between the throwback Tennessee Titans (11-7) and the top-seeded Kansas City Chiefs (13-4) marks the first AFC championship game since 2010 without Brady barking under center and Bill Belichick scowling on the sideline.

It's also the first time since 2002 that the AFC championship doesn't include Brady, Manning or Roethlisberger.

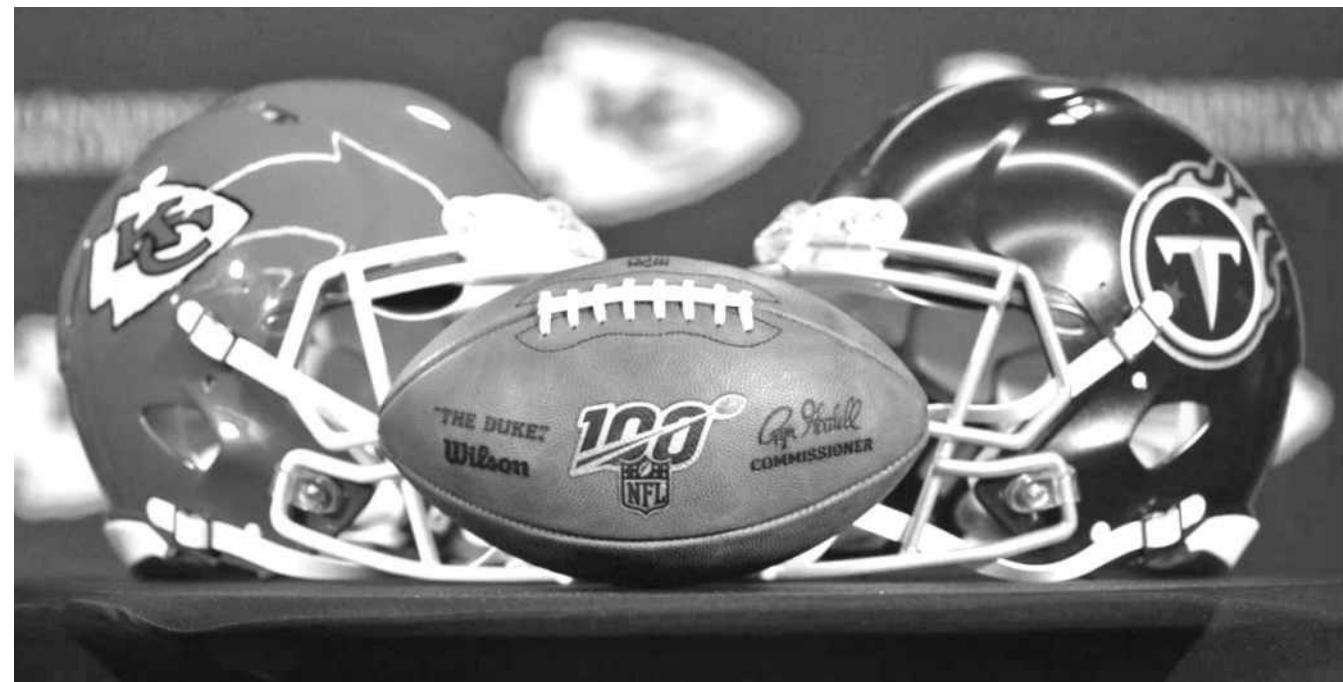
The star attractions this time are the Titans' bulldozing running back Derrick Henry, the man most responsible for putting an end to New England's pre-eminence and for trampling the high hopes in Baltimore after All-Pro Lamar Jackson played his position in 2019 unlike any other quarterback in the league's first 100 years.

Reigning league MVP Mahomes produced an astonishing 51-7 response to the 24-0 hole the Chiefs found themselves in against Houston in the divisional round last week. So consummate was Kansas City's comeback that the Chiefs ran out of fireworks they shoot off to celebrate their touchdowns at Arrowhead Stadium.

Before Brady made the AFC title game his personal playground, John Elway, Bob Griese and Terry Bradshaw built their reputations in the big games that secured Super Bowl appearances for the eventual Hall of Famers.

Two decades before winning two AFC titles from the front office with Manning as his quarterback, Elway engineered five victories for the Denver Broncos from the huddle, including classics such as "The Drive" and "The Fumble" against the Cleveland Browns.

He won Super Bowls following his last two conference championship appearances and another with Manning, who toppled Brady 20-18 in the 2016 AFC title game in the 17th and final meeting between the two greatest quarter-



Helmets for the Kansas City Chiefs and the Tennessee Titans are displayed during a news conference for this week's NFL conference championship football game at Arrowhead Stadium in Kansas City, Mo., Thursday, Jan. 16, 2020. AP

victory at home.

They met again three years later at the RCA Dome in Indianapolis and Brady again built a big lead, this time putting the Patriots up 21-3 early in the second quarter only to watch Manning engineer the biggest comeback in NFC title game history for a 38-34 Colts victory that sent him and coach Tony Dungy to their first Super Bowl.

Joseph Addai's 3-yard run with 1 minute left gave the Colts their first lead in the game.

Manning couldn't bear to watch Brady's desperation drive, looking up from the sideline only after hearing the crowd at the RCA Dome go wild after Marlin Jackson's interception.

"I said a little prayer on that last drive," Manning said. "I don't know if you're supposed to pray for stuff like that, but I said a little prayer."

CHILLY CHARGERS

Cincinnati Bengals coach Forrest Gregg called the Freezer Bowl—a 27-7 win over the San Diego Chargers on Jan. 2, 1982—worse than the Ice Bowl on Dec. 31, 1967, when he was a Packers offensive lineman in the most famous cold-weather game in NFL history.

The Ice Bowl was colder—minus-13 degrees at kickoff with a wind chill of minus-48—but the 35 mph wind gusts in Cincinnati 15 years later made minus-9 degrees feel like minus-59.

"The ball is frozen, the laces are razor-sharp -- the passes are cutting the receivers' hands, but they're not bleeding because it's so cold," recalled Hank Bauer, then a Chargers special teams star and later a team broadcaster. "It was just too cold to play football."

The Chargers were depleted after playing the NFL's most-remembered warm-weather game only the week before, a 41-38 overtime win in Miami. Chargers tight end Kellen Winslow was helped off the field several times in the high-80s heat and humidity, yet caught 13 passes and blocked a field goal try.

"I've never felt so close to death before," Winslow said.

A week later, Winslow caught the only touchdown pass thrown by Dan Fouts, who had icicles hanging from his beard a week after sweating it out in Florida.

Giants hire Garrett as OC, Graham as DC

NEW YORK (AP)—Jason Garrett is headed to the other side of the Giants-Cowboys rivalry.

New York announced Friday night that the former Dallas coach will join new coach Joe Judge's staff as the offensive coordinator.

The team also announced the hiring of Patrick Graham as the defensive coordinator and assistant head coach. Thomas McGaughey was retained by Judge as the Giants' special teams coordinator.

Garrett was told Jan. 5 he was not being brought back by the Cowboys after coaching the team for the previous 9 1/2 seasons. He took over in Dallas as the interim coach when Wade Phillips was fired halfway through the 2010

backs of the 21st century.

Griese led Miami to three consecutive AFC trophies in the years following the 1970 merger, including a win over Pittsburgh and Bradshaw during the only undefeated season in league history.

Bradshaw bounced back to win four AFC titles in six seasons, parlaying each of them into a Super Bowl ring.

Jim Kelly won a record four consecutive AFC championships in the 1990s, but heartbreaking Super Bowl losses followed each of them during a streak of 13 consecutive victories by the NFC representative.

Elway snapped the streak with an upset of Brett Favre and the Green Bay Packers in Super Bowl 32 after beating the Steelers 24-21 for the AFC title, providing the first ring for the celebrated QB class of 1983, which had gone 0-9 in Super Bowls.

THE DRIVE & ;THE FUMBLE

After Bernie Kosar put the Browns ahead 20-13 with a 48-yard touchdown pass with

season and went 87-70, including the playoffs.

"We had some great conversations when we were able to bring him in here," Judge said of Garrett in a statement released by the team. "It was a great opportunity to get to know each other a little better than we had before. It was a great opportunity to sit there and talk ball and share philosophies and views on the game.

"It's a great system he brings with great teaching that will allow our players to go out there and play aggressively."

The 53-year-old Garrett had the club's second-longest tenure behind Pro Football Hall of Famer Tom Landry.

Dallas finished 8-8 for the fourth time under Garrett this

5:43 left in the AFC championship in Cleveland on Jan. 11, 1987, Broncos returner Ken Bell couldn't handle a knuckleball of a kickoff that teammate Gene Lang recovered at the Denver 2.

Broncos coach Dan Reeves was resolute.

"Whenever you have John Elway as your quarterback, you've got a chance," Reeves said.

Elway poked his head into the huddle and hollered, "Let's go!" above the din of 79,915 roaring fans.

Fifteen plays and 98 yards later, Mark Jackson dived into the end zone to catch Elway's touchdown pass with 37 seconds left, and Rick Karlis' extra point tied it. Then, 41 seconds into overtime, Elway and the Broncos took over again and, with two passes covering 50 yards, they marched to the Cleveland 15 before Karlis kicked the winning field goal.

"The day before a big game, you dream of doing things like that," Elway said after beating both the heavily favored Browns and the lon-

ger. The Cowboys opened 3-0 before dropping eight of 12 and losing control of their playoff fate. Dallas missed the playoffs six times in Garrett's nine full seasons.

His contract was expiring with the Cowboys, who instead turned to Mike McCarthy as coach.

Garrett wasn't out of a job for long as Judge made his highest-profile hiring since joining the Giants on Jan. 8. Garrett gives Judge, a first-time NFL head coach, a veteran assistant on his staff.

The Cowboys had the league's top-ranked offense this season, averaging 431.5 yards per game with quarterback Dak Prescott and running back Ezekiel Elliott leading the way.

gest of odds.

"That drive probably is something I might be able to do again," Elway said.

A year later, it wasn't "The Drive" that broke Cleveland hearts but "The Fumble."

The Browns trailed 38-31 at Mile High Stadium when Earnest Byner fumbled at the Denver 2 with a minute remaining and cornerback Jeremiah Castille recovered. Denver punter Mike Horan ran out of the end zone for a safety with 8 seconds to play.

"Last year, I felt elated. This year, I feel numb," Reeves said afterward. "I know the Cleveland Browns feel terrible."

BRADY VS. ;MANNING XVII

In the AFC championship match in Denver on Jan. 24, 2016, Brady and Manning met for the 17th and final time.

"I don't know that there'll ever be another rivalry -- or has been a rivalry -- like it" in football, said Elway, who faced fellow Hall of Famer Dan Marino just twice in his playing career.

With the Giants, Garrett will be tasked with helping develop quarterback Daniel Jones, who showed lots of promise in his rookie season after taking over from Eli Manning as the starter. Jones threw for 3,027 yards and a franchise rookie record 24 touchdowns with 12 interceptions in 13 games, including 12 starts.

Garrett also inherits running back Saquon Barkley, who dealt with a high ankle sprain early in the season but came on strong at the end and finished with 1,003 yards rushing — reaching the 1,000-yard mark for the second straight year to begin his career — and six touchdowns. He also had 52 receptions for 438 yards and two TDs.

Brady had won 11 of their meetings but had split four playoff games, with Manning beating him in the conference championship with the Colts and Broncos.

"This is Jesse James and Wyatt Earp standing out in the street at high noon for the last showdown," Joe Theismann said before the game.

Manning was the last man standing this time when Bradley Roby's interception of Brady's 2-point pass in the closing seconds sealed Denver's 20-18 win in a game in which the Broncos walloped Brady 23 times, more than he'd ever been hit in his career.

"He was rattled," said Broncos cornerback and former Brady teammate Aqib Talib. "I don't think I've ever seen anybody put that much pressure on Tom — ever."

CLASSIC COMEBACK

The first time Brady and Manning squared off in the AFC championship was Jan. 18, 2004, and Brady built a 15-0 lead on Manning's Indianapolis Colts on the way to a 24-14

James scores 31 points, Lakers beat Rockets, 124-115



HOUSTON (AP) — The Los Angeles Lakers were determined to start the second half of their season on a high note following a loss that snapped a nine-game winning streak.

They were able to do that by riding a big third quarter to a 124-115 win over the Houston Rockets.

LeBron James had 31 points and 12 assists for the Lakers, who lost to Orlando on Wednesday night.

"We hated the loss that we had the other night against Orlando," James said. "So we had a couple of days to kind of just reshape, refocus and start the second half of the season the right way, and we did that tonight."

The loss was the third straight for the Rockets, which tied a season high, and they have dropped four of five.

"We're just not playing well right now," coach Mike D'Antoni said. "We haven't played well for a couple of weeks. And the only way you can get out of it is play hard, keep your head down and just go forward."

Kyle Kuzma scored 23 points, and Danny Green and Kentavious Caldwell-Pope each had 20 for the Lakers.

Russell Westbrook scored 35 points for his fourth straight 30-point game and James Harden had 34 for the Rockets, who also lost three in a row in late November.

Harden is confident the Rockets can break out of their funk.

"Everybody throughout the course of your career has been through some tough times and the only way you can get through them is continue to work and continue to go hard and mentally lock in and just try to be as solid as possible," Harden said.

James was impressed with the work Kuzma did against Westbrook in the second half when he was held to 13 points.

"Kuz just kept his body in front of him and made him take tough shots," James said. "He made a couple but Kuz made it tough on him, so that helped changed the game for us."

Los Angeles didn't lead in the first half but used a 32-point third quarter to take a nine-point lead into the fourth.

Suns 123, Celtics 119

In Boston, Devin Booker had 39 points, 10 rebounds and nine assists and the Phoenix Suns overcame a franchise-record 11 3-pointers by Boston's Marcus Smart and beat the Celtics 123-119 on Saturday night.

Deandre Ayton had 26 points and 15 rebounds and Mikal Bridges added a career-best 26 points for the Suns,



AP
Los Angeles Lakers forward LeBron James (23) bumps Houston Rockets guard James Harden (13) as he drives to the basket during the first half of an NBA basketball game Saturday, Jan. 18, 2020, in Houston.

Chicago, which trailed by as many as 19 points, held the Cavaliers to 14 points in the fourth period and forced 10 turnovers.

Lauri Markkanen scored 17 points for the Bulls, who have won two of three.

LaVine has scored at least 20 points in 10 straight games.

Kevin Love had 29 points and Collin Sexton added 26 as Cleveland dropped its fourth straight.

Jazz 123, Kings 101

In Salt Lake City, Rudy Gobert had a season-high 28 points and 15 rebounds and Utah raced to a 16-point lead in the first quarter and routed Sacramento for its 16th win in 18 games.

Bojan Bogdanovic had six 3-pointers on his way to 30 points. Donovan Mitchell contributed 22 for Utah.

De'Aaron Fox scored 21 points before fouling out, and Marvin Bagley added 17 for the Kings (15-27), who lost their fourth straight.

Trevor Ariza, Wenyen Gabriel and Caleb Swanigan were not with the Kings, and coach Luke Walton declined to comment before the game amid reports that the players were to be traded to Portland in exchange for Kent Bazemore, Anthony Tolliver and two future second-round draft picks.

Raptors 122, Timberwolves 112

In Minneapolis, Fred VanVleet returned from a hamstring injury to score 29 points and lead Toronto over Minnesota.

Kyle Lowry added 28 points and seven assists, while Norman Powell scored 20 points off the bench for the Raptors, who have won three straight.

Shai Gilgeous-Alexander scored 22 points and Dennis Schroder and Nierlens Noel each added 15 for Oklahoma City.

Portland had just eight players available. Portland's Kent Bazemore and Anthony Tolliver were not with the team, and coach Terry Stotts declined comment amid reports that the players were to be traded to Sacramento in exchange for Trevor Ariza, Wenyen Gabriel and Caleb Swanigan.

Portland guard C.J. McCollum was out with a sprained left ankle. He ranks second on the team, averaging 21.5 points.

Damian Lillard, who played despite dealing with an upper respiratory illness, led the Trail Blazers with 34 points.

Gary Trent Jr. scored a career-high 30.

New Orleans.

Lou Williams scored 14 of his 32 points during a dominant fourth quarter for Los Angeles, which outscored the Pelicans 31-20 in the final 12 minutes.

Montrezl Harrell scored 24 points for the Clippers, who trailed by 10 in the final seconds of the third quarter.

Lonzo Ball had 18 points, 11 assists and 10 rebounds for the Pelicans, who were seeking their 11th victory in 15 games despite the recent absence of guard Jrue Holiday, who has missed seven games with an elbow injury.

Derrick Favors had 22 points and 11 rebounds for New Orleans, while Brandon Ingram had 21 points and JJ Redick scored 19.

Warriors 109, Magic 95

In San Francisco, D'Angelo Russell scored 26 points and dished out a season-high 12 assists, and short-handed Golden State snapped its longest losing streak in nearly 18 years at 10 games by beating Orlando.

Jordan Poole scored 21 points off the bench and Eric Paschall had 20 points and nine rebounds as Golden State also ended a five-game skid at home.

Markelle Fultz scored 23 points to lead the Magic, who came in with two close victories in three games on their West Coast swing.

The Warriors' 10-game skid

was their longest winless stretch since also dropping 10 in a row from March 9-24, 2002.

Pistons 136, Hawks 103

In Atlanta, Derrick Rose had 27 points and nine assists, Svi Mykhailiuk added 25 points in a reserve role, and Detroit won its second straight game.

The Pistons had a season high in points and shot 59.3% from the field, two nights after shooting one percentage point better, a season high, in a win at Boston.

Markieff Morris finished with 22 points off the bench, and Andre Drummond had 16 points, 17 rebounds and five steals as the Pistons won consecutive games for the first time since Dec. 9.

John Collins scored 20 and De'Andre Hunter added 19 for the Hawks.

The loss spoiled Jeff Teague's first game back with the Hawks. Teague, who finished with 15 points and seven assists, was traded from Minnesota to Atlanta two days ago, returning to his adopted hometown team.

76ers 90, Knicks 87

In New York, Tobias Harris hit a go-ahead 3-pointer late in the fourth quarter, Ben Simmons had 21 points and Philadelphia won its third straight game.

Josh Richardson added 18 points and reserve Furkan Korkmaz scored 17 for the

Conor McGregor blasts Cerrone in 40 seconds in UFC return

By GREG BEACHAM
AP SPORTS WRITER

LAS VEGAS (AP)—Conor McGregor's opening punch bloodied Donald Cerrone's nose. He then floored Cerrone only 20 seconds into the bout with a perfectly placed kick to the head, and he mercilessly finished on the ground.

When he paraded around the ring with an Irish flag on his shoulders to celebrate, the mixed martial arts world knew McGregor is back with a big bang.

The Irish former two-division champion came out of a three-year stretch of relative inactivity and outside-the-cage troubles with a welterweight performance in UFC 246 on Saturday night that echoed his greatest fights during his unparalleled rise.

"I feel really good, and I came out of here unscathed," McGregor said. "I'm in shape. We've got work to do to get back to where I was."

After hurting Cerrone (36-14) with his first punch, McGregor (22-4) dropped him with a sublime kick to the jaw. McGregor pounced and forced referee Herb Dean to save Cerrone, delighting a sellout crowd of 19,040 at T-Mobile Arena.

McGregor's hand hadn't been raised in victory since November 2016, when he stopped lightweight Eddie



Conor McGregor celebrates after defeating Donald "Cowboy" Cerrone during a UFC 246 welterweight mixed martial arts bout Saturday, Jan. 18, 2020, in Las Vegas. AP

Alvarez to become the first fighter in UFC history to hold two championship belts simultaneously. With his fame and fortune multiplying, McGregor fought only his boxing match with Floyd Mayweather in 2017, and he lost a one-sided UFC bout to lightweight champion Khabib Nurmagomedov in late 2018.

"I wasn't committed," McGregor said afterward while speaking to reporters with a

bottle of his Proper Twelve whiskey on the table before him. "I just felt like I disrespected the people that believed in me and supported me. That's what led me to recenter myself and get back to where I was at."

After a year spent out of competition and in repeated trouble with the law, McGregor got back into training and vowed to return to elite form. This dramatic victory over Cerrone indicated he's

well on his way, and McGregor has vowed to fight multiple times in 2020.

Welterweight champion Kamaru Usman and veteran brawler Jorge Masvidal watched UFC 246 from cage-side. Either man could be McGregor's next opponent, but UFC President Dana White is pushing for a rematch with Nurmagomedov, who first

fights Tony Ferguson in April.

"Any one of these mouthy fools can get it," McGregor yelled into the microphone. "Every single one of them can get it. It does not matter. I'm back and I'm ready."

McGregor also wants to make up for his loss to Nurmagomedov, but he doesn't want to wait until the champion is ready to fight again

in late summer. McGregor wants an earlier fight, and he predicted that the Nurmagomedov-Ferguson fight will be scrapped, as it already has four times during those fighters' careers.

Cerrone is the winningest fighter in UFC history with 23 victories, a mark that reflects both his durability and commitment to an uncommonly busy schedule. Cerrone, who also holds the UFC record with 16 stoppage wins, had fought a whopping 11 times since McGregor's win over Alvarez, and he was in the cage for the 15th time since he lost his only UFC title shot in December 2015.

But Cerrone's last two fights were stopped when he took too much damage, and he couldn't block McGregor's decisive kick or recover from the punishment on the ground.

"I'd never seen anything like that," Cerrone said. "He busted my nose, it started bleeding, and he stepped back and head-kicked me. Oh, man. This happened this fast?"

KRISHNAN

From Page 28

gust), Juan L. Babauta (September), Manny Alvarez (October), and Nick Sablan (November).

SHIRLEY'S

From Page 28

wouldn't go down without a fight, as they quickly rallied back and a 4-point play by Pastrana—a triple and a technical for clapping against a defender—moved them within 5 points, 88-93, with time down to 2:19.

A block on Shirley's center Dennis Mendiola moments later would lead to a fastbreak layup by Pastrana that made it 90-93. After another foiled Shirley's offensive, Pastrana would be fouled and convert 1-2 from the line to make it just a 2-point lead.

Both teams would exchange turnovers and fruitless heaves on the basket before Islander Rent A Car guard J.R. Barrios was fouled and he coolly sank both free throws to send the game into overtime.

In the extra 5 minutes of play, Freddie Pelisamen relived his fireman days by scoring 7 quick points, but Islander Rent A Car answered

The two-day SGA 2019 Ace of Aces Tournament is scheduled on Feb. 1, 2020, a Saturday, at the Laolao Bay Golf & Resort and Feb. 2, 2020, a Sunday, at Kingfisher Golf Links. Tee time is to be announced.

Day 1 of SGA 2019 Ace of Aces Tournament will also be the January 2020 Ace of the Month and Day 2 will be the February 2020 Ace of the Month.

all of them with Pastrana's 3 seemingly sending the game into a second overtime. That is until Diaz had had enough and sank the tie-breaking rainbow.

"I just wanted to finish the game so I shot the 3. I'm 45 years old already and can't play long games like this anymore," Diaz said shortly after hitting the game-winner.

He wound up with 28 points and for his game-long performance, the Marianas Visitors Authority staff took home best player of the game honors. Pelisamen backed him up with 25 markers, while point guard Jack Aranda fired 15.

Pastrana saw his 40-point outing end in an OT loss. Islander Rent A Car guard J.R. Barrios was fouled and he coolly sank both free throws to send the game into overtime.

In the extra 5 minutes of play, Freddie Pelisamen relived his fireman days by scoring 7 quick points, but Islander Rent A Car answered

William finished with 24 points to earn best player of the game honors as Team Lakay won its first game in five tries. PIC, which dropped to 0-4, was paced by the 22 points of James Abuy.

THURSDAY

Team Lakay 83 – William 24, Capalad 18, Bernardo 10, Alegre 5, Cabrera 5, Reyes 4, Solis 4, Raho 3, Macaraig 2, Lumen 2, Toribio 2.

PIC 72 – Abuy 22, Castro 14, Ken 13, Dan 13, Bartolo 4, Agustin 4, Sublemente 2.

Scoring by quarters: 8-18, 31-41, 59-55, 83-72.

SATURDAY

Shirley's Coffee Shop 105 – Diaz 28, Pelisamen 25, Aranda 15, Mendiola 15, Flores 10, Duenas 9, Sablan 4.

Islander Rent A Car 102 – Pastrana 40, Mangali 15, Mintac 14, Jandoc 13, Quan 8, Barrios 7, Torres 5.

Scoring by quarters: 16-22, 46-44, 69-70, 93-93, 105-102, OT.

500

From Page 28

28 and participants are asked to bring swim clothes, drinking water, and a towel.

Perez said they're offering only three lessons this semester due to previous experience.

"We have learned from experience that if tides are too low, it's not a pleasant teaching environment. In fact, we encourage everyone to start paying more attention to our natural

world—especially tides, wind, and clouds," she said.

Last session, the Gamsun Project had about 90 students register and its summer programs attracted almost 300 total youth over two weeks.

"This is the second session of Gamsun Project, which is specifically aimed at half-day Fridays. I see half-day Fridays as an opportunity to get a lot of the community's youth," said Perez.

Aside from the Gamsun Proj-



CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

500 Sails has a group of trained high school lifeguards and teachers who are ready to give back to the community by helping the islands' youth learn to swim.



Astros, Red Sox look ahead in wake of sign-stealing scandal

PAGE 24

Saipan Tribune Sports

Tom Brady most dominant player in AFC championship history

PAGE 25



28 MONDAY, JANUARY 20, 2020

SAIPAN TRIBUNE

Shirley's Diaz 3 nips Islander in OT

By MARK RABAGO
mark_rabago@saipantribune.com
ASSOCIATE EDITOR

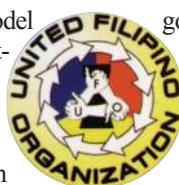
Many time national player Ed Diaz hit a 3-pointer with 7.9 seconds left in overtime to allow Shirley's Coffee Shop to escape Islander Rent A Car, 105-102, in the open division of the United Filipino Organization IT&E 2019 Basketball League last Saturday at the Gilbert C. Ada Gymnasium.

Sharpshooter Rodel Pastrana earlier knot-ted the score at 102-all with a booming triple with 23 ticks remaining, but rather than panic, Shirley's calmly brought the ball down to their front court before it found its way to Diaz, who nonchalantly rose up for the winning triple.

Islander Rent A Car tried to equalize with a Hail Mary of their own in the waning seconds, but their prayers weren't answered.

It was a sorry loss for Islander Rent A Car, which absorbed its second loss in six games, while Shirley's zoomed to its third straight win to improve its win-loss slate to 4-2 in the open division.

Islander Rent A Car actually



got off to a good start as Pastrana and Elgene Mangali combined for 15 points in the opening quarter to give their team a 22-16 advantage against Shirley's.

Diaz and Matt Duenas, however, would lead a Shirley's uprising at the start of the second quarter. With Diaz unloading 9 points and Duenas adding 8 markers, Shirley's managed to turn the tables on Islander Rent A Car and entered the halftime break ahead by a deuce, 46-44.

The game continued to be a nip-and-tuck affair at the start of the third quarter with neither team giving up any quarter.

Mac Mintac fired 7 points in the period, ably supported by two hits from downtown



MARK RABAGO
Shirley's Coffee Shop point guard Jack Aranda drives to the basket against a couple of Islander Rent A Car defenders during their open division game in the UFO caging last Saturday at the Gilbert C. Ada Gymnasium.

by Mangali as Islander Rent A Car took precarious 1-point lead going into the final 10 minutes of the contest, 70-69.

The match was anybody's ballgame until the midway point of the fourth quarter, when Shirley's unleashed a

fiery run that saw them erect an 89-79 lead—capped by a 3-pointer by Diaz—with four minutes left.

But Islander Rent A Car

See SHIRLEY'S on Page 27

Das Krishnan books final ticket to yearend tourney

By MARK RABAGO
mark_rabago@saipantribune.com
ASSOCIATE EDITOR

the final nine holes. The 12-handicapper came away with a gross of 86.

Das Krishnan won the Saipan Golfers Association December Ace of the Month Tournament held last Dec. 8 at the Kingfisher Golf Links Course.



Krishnan

In the closest to the pin competition, Krishnan kept on winning by taking hole No. 15, while Joe Sablan topped hole No. 12. Frank Castro was without peer in hole No. 6. There were no winners in hole No. 8.

The Fiesta Resort & Spa Saipan F&B director blazed the trail at the Talafofo golf course with a gross score of 83.

Krishnan fired a 43 in the first nine holes before shooting a scorching 40 in the back nine. With his 12 handicap, he finished with a net score of 71.

Two strokes back was Tony Deleon Guerrero with his net 73. He started the day with a 42 in the front nine before limping to the clubhouse with a 46. The 15-handicapper had a gross score of 88.

Coming in third place was Manny Alvarez with his net 74 built around a 44 in the first nine holes and a 42 in

See KRISHNAN on Page 27

500 Sails' Gamsun Project is back



CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

Local youth frolic in the water during the most recent session of 500 Sails and 4-H Marianas' Gamsun Project.

By MARK RABAGO
mark_rabago@saipantribune.com
ASSOCIATE EDITOR

500 Sails and 4-H Marianas relaunched its Gamsun Project last Friday in the waters off Guma Sakman in Susupe Beach across Marianas High School.

The non-profit's co-founder Emma Perez said the Gamsun Project is a series of free swim classes for school age youth K-12, made possible from the support of 4-H Marianas, Northern Marianas Cooperative Research, Extension & Education Services, and Hotel Association of the Northern Marianas Islands members.

500 Sails has a group of trained high school lifeguards and teachers who are ready to give back to the community by helping the islands' youth learn to swim.

The swimming lessons will be offered from 2pm to 4pm last Jan. 17, Feb. 7, and Feb.

See 500 on Page 27